Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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OPINION METER
This week's poll:

Do you support the proposal for a Social Security buy-back for the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

NATION

America's newest veterans are filing for disability benefits at a historic rate. ➤ PAGE 16

WORLD

Syria strongly denies allegations that its forces killed scores of people. ➤ PAGE 18

LIFE & STYLE

Nicole Kidman's red carpet date traveled for 35 hours to join her in Cannes. ➤ PAGE 21

Hotel Riviera shuts down. PAGE 3
It's final: Liberation Day will just be a daylong event. PAGE 7

A moving, historic moment

» Over 160 Marines join Tinian Memorial Day ceremony

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TINIAN—For the first time in almost seven decades, over 160 U.S. Marines joined the CNMI yesterday in honoring fallen soldiers on the very ground that was, at the height of World War II, the busiest airfield in the world, with military planes taking off or landing every 90 seconds.

RELATED NEWS
➤ See more photos on PAGE 14

Tinian's historic, moving, and well-attended Memorial Day ceremony

See HISTORIC on Page 4

Two U.S. Marines prepare to fold an American flag as part of a historic Memorial Day ceremony on Tinian's North Field, which was bustling yesterday with Marines participating in Exercise Geiger Fury, Tinian residents, and visitors.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A young girl leaves a kiss for a departed family member who was among the fallen and active servicemembers and war veterans honored yesterday at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery in Marpi. CLARISSA V. DAVID

Families of the fallen also honored

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

As the CNMI paid tribute to its war veterans, fallen, and active men and women in uniform, the island community was also one in acknowledging the sacrifices that the heroes' families and loved ones made during Memorial Day ceremonies held Monday at the Veterans Cemetery in Marpi.

RELATED NEWS
➤ See more photos on PAGE 13

Hundreds of family members joined Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Eloy S. Inos, other local officials, active military personnel, veterans, and community members for the solemn ceremony, which also coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

Capt. John Heckmann of the Joint Region Marianas, who served as keynote speaker, described military families as the "most honored guests" in yesterday's event, which had the theme "In Honor of Our Fallen Heroes, Recognizing Families."

"I want to take a moment and say thank you to the loved ones of our

See FAMILIES on Page 4

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Local

Nishida is Calvary Christian's valedictorian

Eighteen-year-old Midori Nishida is this year's valedictorian for the Calvary Christian Academy, which held its graduation ceremony at the school auditorium last Friday.

Nishida is the older of two children of Tomohiko and Victoria Nishida.

A member of the prestigious National Society of High School Scholars, the younger Nishida won third place in the 28th Annual Attorney General's Cup early this month and was awarded first place for two years in a row in the "Voice of Democracy" essay and speech writing competition of the Veterans of Foreign War.

For three consecutive years, Nishida represented the CNMI in the National Forensic League competition in the U.S., including this year's contest held in Indiana. She was also the recipient of the Junior Statesmen of America's scholarship at Stanford University last year.

Nishida

Besides her studies, Nishida also does volunteer work as assistant coach for the National Junior Forensic League and Primary Grade Forensic Competition, as well as the American Red Cross swimming lessons for younger children under Tsunami Saipan Swim Club.

"Being the class valedictorian is one of my accomplishments that I am proud of," said Nishida, who has consistently excelled in her academics. "Now that it's all done, I am glad that I didn't give up, and I'm proud of my high school life."

She describes her family as "my biggest fans and supporters."

Nishida said her love for science prompted her to take a premedicine course in Waseda University in Japan and eventually specialize in pediatrics.

"I chose Waseda University in Japan because it gives me an opportunity to live and learn about my culture and heritage," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Nishida encouraged students aspiring to be at the top of their class to be diligent and passionate about what they do. "Don't let your circumstances keep you from achieving success. Instead, let them be a guide and stepping stone to reaching your best," she added. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

Commonwealth Cancer Association
AWARENESS • EDUCATION • HOPE

The Commonwealth Cancer Association, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, the Commonwealth Cancer Control Program, and other social and human service providers will honor our citizens who are living with and beyond cancer. June 1 to June 8 will be observed as the 2012 Commonwealth/National Cancer Survivors Week-Day and will host events throughout the week. We urge all cancer survivors to join in this joyous celebration of life.
The theme for this week's celebration is:

"Rainbow of Hope"

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, May 30	7:00 p.m.	John Gonzales Talk Show
Thursday, May 31	7:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	KKMP Interview, Red Room Proclamation Signing, Governor's Conference Room
Friday, June 1	6:00 p.m.	Healing Mass, Kristo Rai Church
Saturday, June 2	4:00 p.m.	Healthy Walk, Garapan Fishing Base to Triple J and back
Sunday, June 3	7:00 a.m.	National Cancer Survivors Day Island Wide-Ribbon Tieing (Rainbow Colors)
Monday, June 4		Educational Field Trip to Hospital
Wednesday, June 6	7:00 p.m.	John Gonzales Talk Show
Friday, June 8	5:30 p.m.	Cancer Survivors Support Group Gala, Raraina Room, Aqua Resort Club, Saipan

This week provides an opportunity for all of our people living with a history of cancer to connect with each other, celebrate milestones, and recognize the healthcare providers, family, and friends who have supported them along the way.

We encourage all cancer survivors to wear 2012 Survivors shirts to all events.
For more information, please contact the Commonwealth Cancer Association at 682-0050 or send email to cca@ccamarianas.org

KNOWLEDGE HOPE INSPIRATION

This ad was brought to you by the CNMI Breast and Cervical Screening Program with 100% funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

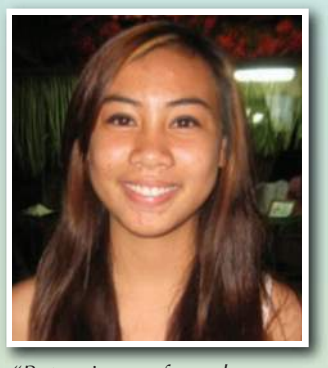
A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority

Tourism is everybody's business.

May is Tourism Month in the Northern Mariana Islands, and this month, the Marianas Visitors Authority turns the spotlight on you for your thoughts on tourism related opinions.

What do you think the community should do to improve tourism?

"Just encourage more tourists to come to Saipan, advertise what Saipan has, the beauty...."
Kekoa Ruak



"Put a sign up for volunteers to clean up, because there's a lot of pollution."
Alexis Ada

"I think they've been doing a lot, like this Taste of the Marianas and the Agricultural Fair. Sports is good, too. A lot of people are coming in for competitions; there's a lot of competitions around the world, so we can step it up."
George Poquiz

"When it comes to traffic, when they see people about to cross, they should stop. You always need to greet outsiders, no matter what nationality they are. When you see tourists, you can always inform them we have this (like Taste of the Marianas) going on, come and visit. They can taste our food and see cultural dances and art."
Claire and daughter

Have an event you'd like to invite visitors to?
Post it on the Marianas Visitors Authority Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com.

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

Hotel Riviera shuts down

» No power, no wages for staff for 2 months now

» 15 employees walk out since Mother's Day

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Hotel Riviera Saipan shut down operations on May 13, Mother's Day, as it has no electric power and its 15 employees refused to report for work after not receiving their paychecks for two consecutive months, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

Worse, the last paychecks given to employees all bounced due to insufficiency of funds and the hotel's assistant general manager, Hye Kyeong Lee, could not be located, according to some employees who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Changshin Resort, the owner of the 135-room Hotel Riviera, owes its 15 employees between $3,000 to $5,000 in unpaid wages, the staff disclosed.

The hotel, adjacent to the Northern Marianas College, was dark when *Saipan Tribune* visited the premises Friday night. The main entrance was blocked with barbed wires.

At least three male Koreans were in the premises. One of them stated that the hotel was closed down because the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. cut their power a few months ago.

Another visit over the weekend and yesterday showed no people at all. A hotel's van and a tour bus were parked in front of the lobby. The water in the outdoor swimming pool is already green due to lack of maintenance.

Saipan Tribune learned that some workers are still staying in the hotel rooms, using candles and flashlights at night.

About five to six in-house tenants have already left in the past few weeks because the management cut off the generator supply.

One staff said that the hotel management has been using a power generator since Feb. 26, 2012, after CUC cut their power for failing to pay at least $40,000 in utility bills.

The management stopped using the generator on May 5, 2012, one worker said.

Since 2009, the wages of the hotel's workers have been on and off due to lack of funds. The workers kept working as the management would give them $150 to $200 whenever there is a collection.

After some workers complained to the U.S. Labor Department, the management issued paychecks in December 2011, postdated to Dec. 20, 2011. The checks, however, all bounced due to lack of funds.

In January 2012, the workers did a work stoppage to protest, but the management talked to them, one staff said.

"Since Mother's Day we did not work because we're abandoned, so the hotel already closed," another worker said.

A few weeks ago, a Korean national came to the hotel and introduced himself as coming from the Korea main office of the new owner. The Korean promised that the new owner will address the problem at the hotel by the end of this month.

"Although we received a lot of broken promises in the past, we are still willing to work, that's why we are still waiting until the end of this month," the staff said.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The outdoor swimming pool of Hotel Riviera Saipan has turned green due to the lack of maintenance and power supply. The 135-room hotel shut down its operations since Mother's Day when employees refused to work after not receiving wages for two months.

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HISTORIC

From Page 1

dwarfed yesterday's ceremonies on Saipan and Rota.

Crowd estimate was 500 to 700, including the over 160 Marines from Marine Aircraft Group-12 out of Japan participating in Exercise Geiger Fury, the largest military exercise the CNMI has seen in years.

"The playing of Taps and the laying of the wreath, that got to me. It was a touching, impressive ceremony. You can't help but think of those who sacrificed their lives in the name of freedom and peace. I thought about those I personally knew who lost their lives. Even one is too many," Tinian resident and retired U.S. Army captain Vincent King, 52, told *Saipan Tribune*.

His wife, Zoey, described the ceremony as "emotional and moving."

King, holding a POW-MIA [Prisoners of War-Missing in Action] flag, said it was the first Memorial Day ceremony he has ever attended on Tinian.

The Battle of Tinian was fought from July 24 to Aug. 1, 1944, some 68 years ago.

Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz said for such a short period of time, 328 U.S. service members lost their lives and 1,571 were wounded.

"Each and every one of those sacrifices, those precious lives lost, the pain that those wounds must have caused, every one of them must not be forgotten," he said.

In the ongoing War against Terror, Tinian also lost three of its own—U.S. Army PFC Victor Michael Fontanilla, US Navy Seaman Ana Camacho, and U.S. Army Sgt. Julian Manglona.

"The late Fontanilla is our first cousin. We're honored to have him as a family. We always remember him as a fun loving person," said Rikkie Farrell, 16, along with her sister Richeena, 17.

Quoting President Barack Obama's 2011 Memorial Day remarks, Mayor Dela Cruz said, "Our nation owes a debt to its fallen heroes that we can never fully repay. But we can honor their sacrifice, and we must."

"We haven't seen a crowd as big as this for ceremonies like this. It was my idea to bring my four kids here, aged 7 to 16, because I want them to have an idea how those people who lost their lives while serving in the military should be honored and remembered. We have so many relatives currently serving," said resident Teruko King, 32.

'Historic significance'

Tinian was the launching pad for the atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to hasten the end of World War II.

The island, with an estimated population of 3,136 as of 2010, is again playing an important role for the U.S. military as it hosts Exercise Geiger Fury 2012. Two-thirds of Tinian lands are leased by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Lt. Col. Michael Taylor, commanding officer of U.S. Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, said in his remarks at the Memorial Day ceremony that having Marines and sailors on Tinian has "incredible historic significance."

In 1944 on Tinian, the namesake of the ongoing exercise, Maj. Gen. Roy Geiger, directed the amphibious assaults of the 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions.

"It was these Marines that battled a committed, disciplined, and well dug-in enemy and drove them from this strategically important island," Taylor said. "It was the Seabees who worked 20-hour days to construct what was, at the time, the largest airfield in the world."

Taylor also spoke of the sailors of USS *Indianapolis* who delivered to Tinian the materials needed to construct the atomic bombs, many of whom would perish on the return trip when their ship was sunk by a Japanese torpedo. Due to the secrecy of their mission, no distress signal was ever sent.

"It was the Airmen who loaded those bombs onto aircraft very near to where we gather today. The brave pilots and aircrew who accurately delivered those bombs to their targets, hastening the end of World War II and undoubtedly saving countless Japanese and American lives," he added.

Taylor said Memorial Day is not only a day to honor those who gave their lives in military service to the nation, but also a day to be with family.

"Although the over 160 Marines and sailors here on Tinian are away from their families on this holiday, the community of Tinian has welcomed us and made us feel like part of their family," he added.

U.S. Marines Lance Cpl Nicholas Thompson, 20, of Michigan, said as a child, he thought that *Enola Gay* was launched from Guam. He said he now knows it was launched from Tinian.

U.S. Navy Corpsman Scotti Hargrove, 23, said she's always been interested in learning about wars, especially World War II, so it was such an experience stepping foot on Tinian.

"I also enjoy the weather here," said Hargrove, of South Carolina. She added that Tinian people have been hospitable.

Another U.S. Navy Corpsman, Ruben Fonseca, from California, said "Tinian has a lot of history to it."

"I didn't know that Tinian is a U.S. territory. This place blows my mind. There's a wealth of culture and history; lots of World War II remnants. This is a very special place," he said. "There's also a fusion of different cultures here and it works out so well."

Fonseca, who has been with the U.S. Navy for 10 years, said he considers Tinian "America's hidden diamond."

A flyover performed by four F-18s, which flew in a "Missing Man Formation," also wowed the crowd of children and adults during the ceremony. Many were seen waving miniature American flags.

'Friendship Day'

Tinian's Memorial Day ceremony was followed by a so-called "Friendship Day" wherein the civilian community got to interact with military personnel and see military equipment, transforming historic North Field into a hub of activities.

Boni Gonzales, 46, said he's been on Tinian for 21 years but this is only the first time he attended Memorial Day because his sons J.R., 5, and Benni, 10, wanted to see real military planes and vehicles.

Jessilyn San Nicolas, 14, a student at Tinian Junior and Senior High School, said she wants to be a Marine someday, as she and her friend Thia King, 12, and Audrein Cruz, 11, got to ask some Marines questions about what they do and how their vehicles and equipment work.

U.S. Marine PFC Justin Buford, 24, of Illinois, said that people on Tinian have been very welcoming. He said the ongoing training will help him do a better job as a motor transportation personnel. This is Buford's first training outside of Iwakuni, Japan where he is stationed.

U.S. Marine Cpl Samuel Roberto, 22, of Guam, said this is his first time on Tinian.

"It reminds me of home. We have the same weather, same music, same food, except there are fewer people here," the engineer mechanic said.

Tinian's Memorial Day ceremony yesterday was followed by a so-called "Friendship Day" wherein the civilian community got to interact with military personnel and see military equipment, transforming historic North Field into a hub of activities.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

FAMILIES

From Page 1

fallen servicemen and women," Heckmann told the crowd. "You, more than anyone, know the meaning of 'ultimate sacrifice.' Their sacrifice is also your sacrifice. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you."

Heckmann, regional engineer and commanding officer of the U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas, briefly recounted the origins of Memorial Day, which was initially a day of remembrance for those who fought during the American Civil War.

"After every great loss, there needs to be a time to remember, a time to heal, and a time to honor those who have lost," said Heckmann, adding that Memorial Day has since become a tradition to remember all who fought and died in service.

The Commonwealth, Heckmann said, has had its share of sons and daughters in the battlefield since the 1940s to ensure the freedom that the entire nation enjoys to this day. He noted the recent demise of Marine Lance Cpl. Ramon T. Kaipat, who is among the 16 sons and daughters of the Northern Marianas who died serving the nation with courage and sense of honor.

"Their sacrifice is a reminder that our freedom is won at great cost," he said. "All of us who grew up in the peace that followed war have benefited from their sacrifices, loyalty, and acts of heroism. We must never forget what they have done for us and for our children. Today is their day, set aside to recall the path of freedom they helped pave."

For his part, Fitial urged the community to remember the fallen heroes' faithful service and sacrifices as they have "unselfishly risked their lives so that you and I can continue to live in freedom."

"We cannot hope to find full measure to repay them and their loved ones. But the very least we can do is honor their memory and treasure the liberty they bought for us with their lives," said the governor.

Lt. Gov. Inos, Heckmann, and CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan led active servicemen in laying a wreath for all fallen soldiers. The U.S. Army Reserve Center provided the 21-gun salute while Dr. Ed Tudor played Taps.

Single-stemmed flowers were given to family members who placed them by their respective fallen soldiers' graves at the cemetery.

Press secretary Angel Demapan served as emcee for yesterday's event, which also featured two F-18 flybys from the Marine Aircraft Group 12 out of Iwakuni Japan and the 36th Wing Andersen Air Force Base in Guam after the ceremony.

The Saipan Southern High School JROTC Manta Ray Battalion posted the flags as the Marianas High School choirs sang the national anthems. Pacific Winds Concert Band provided pre- and post-ceremonial music.

FROM 2-YEAR-OLDS TO 70-YEAR-OLDS

Brighter smiles on Tinian as Navy, Marines see 223 dental patients

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TINIAN—Ethan Palacios, 6, braved the dentist's clinic as he patiently waited to get his dental filling and extraction done.

"I'm not scared," the young boy said, shortly before U.S. Navy Lt. Cdr. Jose Suris, dental officer for Exercise Geiger Fury 2012, worked on him at Tinian Health Center yesterday afternoon.

Palacios was just one of the 223 dental patients on Tinian that Suris' dental mission team has seen in two weeks. The figure does not include those seen yesterday.

Suris said they provided dental cleanings to 63 patients, dental extractions to 61, dental fillings to 13, and treatment for dental infections to six, among others.

"We've done so many dental extractions because many patients coming here have acute problems. And the only solution is to remove the tooth because here, our options are very limited. And the extent of the decay on the teeth is so great that there's just no way to repair the tooth," Suris told *Saipan Tribune.*

The dental services are offered free of charge to Tinian residents.

Rosita Palacios, mother of the young dental patient, said her family has been able to save at least $200 by availing of the military's free dental services.

"In these difficult times, it's really a big help. I thank the Navy and the Marines for volunteering their time for families like us. This is especially helpful to those who don't have dental insurance," she said as she waited for her son who was at the dentist clinic.

Suris said they have seen children as young as 2 years old and those already in their 60s and 70s.

He said about 95 percent of the people they have seen have urgent dental needs. That means these patients have some dental conditions that put them in pain.

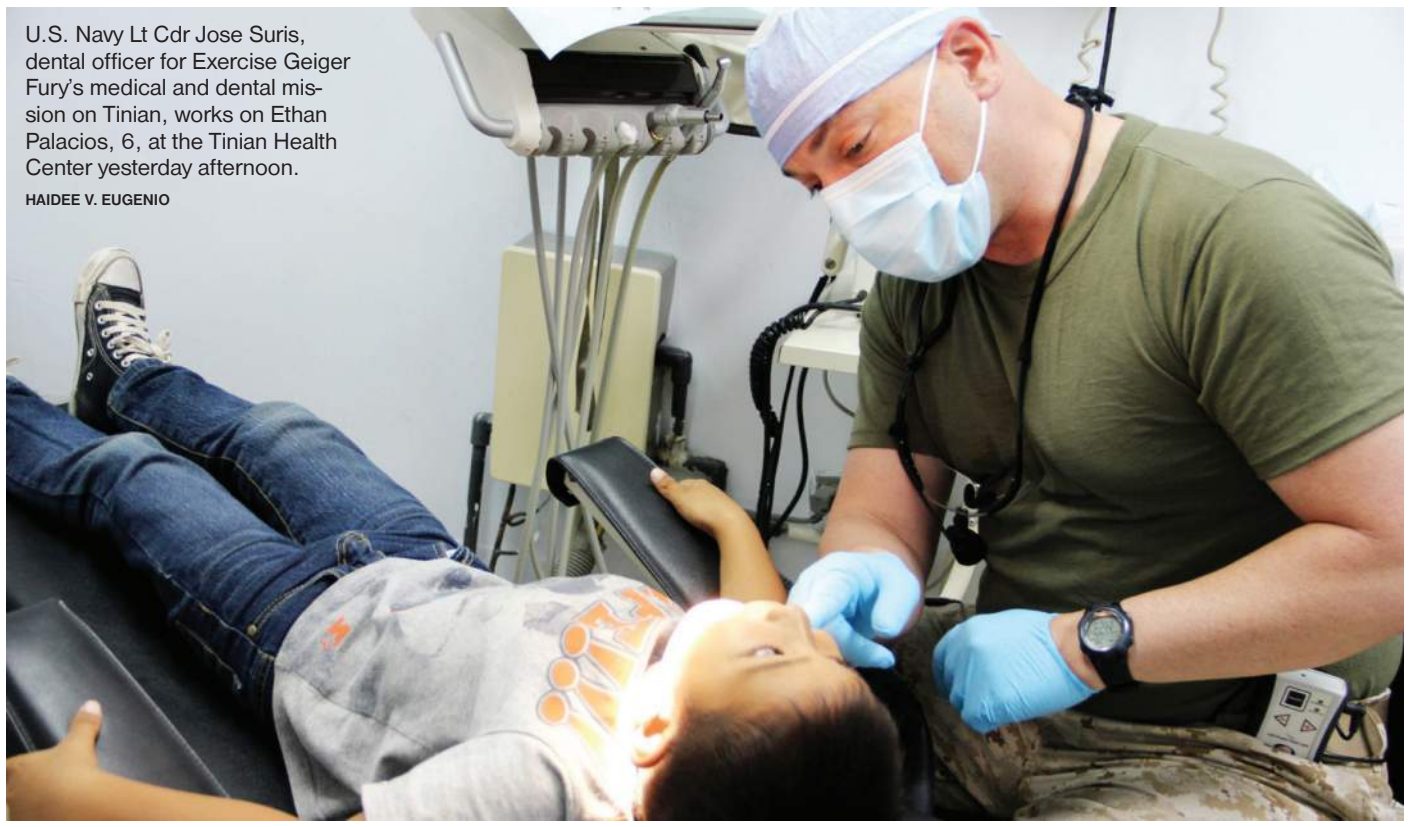
The dental mission team attends to 17 to 20 patients a day, Monday to Friday.

"It's been overwhelming at times," he added.

Despite the challenges, Suris said this is "probably one of the rewarding experiences I've had" in his eight-year career with the U.S. Navy.

Besides Suris, there are two other hospital Corpsman in the dental mission team—HN Cody Frink and Felipe Bowen.

Exercise Geiger Fury received generous donations of dental supplies including toothbrushes, floss, micro-brushes, lidocaine and isocaine, from Guam, Saipan, and Tinian businesses and practitioners. These donations allowed the dental mission team to perform minor removals, minor fillings, and treat minor dental infections.



U.S. Navy Lt Cdr Jose Suris, dental officer for Exercise Geiger Fury's medical and dental mission on Tinian, works on Ethan Palacios, 6, at the Tinian Health Center yesterday afternoon.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Fire chief requests for more time to respond to lawsuit

Thomas M. Manglona, the Department of Public Safety's Fire Division chief, has asked the district court to extend its deadline for him to respond to a lawsuit filed against him by a private ambulance company.

Manglona, through assistant attorney general Gilbert Birnbrich, informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI last week that his failure to file a timely response was excusable.

Birnbrich said he viewed the date of service for the order setting the briefing schedule and mistook it for the date St. Michael's served Manglona with the summons and complaint.

Birnbrich said he believed in good faith that the plaintiff served Manglona with the complaint on May 3, 2012. As such, the lawyer said, he prepared Manglona's response for May 23, 2012.

On May 23, Birnbrich learned that the plaintiff filed a motion for the entry of default the day before. Upon checking the court's system, the lawyer said he discovered this to be true.

At this discovery, Birnbrich said another attorney in the Office of the Attorney General contacted plaintiff's counsel about Birnbrich's intent to file a motion to extend time. Birnbrich said the plaintiffs' counsel stated that he did not oppose a motion to extend time.

August Healthcare Group LLC, owner of Saint Michael's Medical Response, is suing Manglona and several others for allegedly conspiring to destroy the company's business.

Aside from Thomas and Joaquin Manglona, August Healtcare also named as co-defendants Michael Manibusan Takai, John Benedict Taisakan Pelisamen, and Marianas Global Ventures LLC, which owns Priority Care. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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TSL Foundation donates $8K scholarships to NMTI students

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan and Northern Marianas Trades Institute founder Anthony Pellegrino, along with some Tan Holdings officials and NMTI staff, pose for a group photo with some students outside NMTI building in Lower Base yesterday morning. Tan handed over Tan Siu Lin Foundation's $8,000 worth of scholarships to deserving students. The Foundation is expected to donate an additional $8,000 worth of scholarships to NMTI in the next few months.

Donald Norita, 37, has been a student for a year and six months now at the Northern Marianas Trades Institute in Lower Base. Yesterday, he was presented with a $400 scholarship so he could continue attending his construction 1 class at NMTI for six more months.

"It will help me pay for my tools, tuition," said the beaming Norita who has three children.

Norita was among the 20 NMTI students who received scholarships worth $400 each for a total of $8,000 from the Tan Siu Lin Foundation.

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan handed the donation yesterday to the students at the NMTI building in Lower Base.

Ed Arriola Jr., Tan Siu Lin Foundation corporate affairs manager, said the donation is part of Tan Holdings' 40th anniversary series of events throughout the year.

Arriola said another batch of 20 scholarships worth a total of $8,000 will also be donated to deserving NMTI students in the next few months.

"We always feel great about NMTI and everything they're doing for the community. It is a great learning institution. Jerry really loves this school. And the school needs a lot more help," Arriola said.

He said a lot of people at NMTI are taking classes to become future auto mechanics, plumbers, carpenters—even chefs and those learning how to do housekeeping.

"They all try to learn new skills here. Some of these people here maybe have other jobs but they want to try something new, learn something new. So it's a good opportunity for them to try it out," he said.

Arriola said that Tan, who always encourages people to better themselves, shares the same principles with NMTI founder Anthony Pellegrino.

Pellegrino himself said he is very overwhelmed and honored that Tan and the Tan Siu Lin Foundation sees fit to assist them and recognize the efforts of the NMTI administration.

"This is for the good of the community, we're slowly training our own local workforce which we have to very, very badly," Pellegrino said. "I'm very honored that Jerry Tan came this morning and awarded us a substantial cash award. And I want to say thank you very much."

The NMTI founder hopes that the rest of the community, other agencies, and other companies will visit them and see what they can do for the people, their company and for the community together.

"We have to work together. We live together, we have to work together," he said.

Founded in 2008, NMTI will be celebrating its fourth year this July.

Pellegrino said NMTI has already produced hundreds who are now working with different agencies, hotels, and a lot of companies.

"I would say about 60 percent of our students are currently working, maybe in auto repair shops, some own businesses, some at the hotels. A lot of our students are at the CUC [Commonwealth Utilities Corp.] as replacement of nonresident workers," he said.

"It's a continuing process. It takes a long time to do it but it's happening," he added. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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It's final: Liberation Day will just be a daylong event

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It's official: The 2012 Liberation Day festivities will just be a daylong celebration, according to Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores.

Flores, who just returned from a trip to the Philippines, said in a briefing Friday that he and members of the Liberation Day committee arrived at that decision following a meeting on May 24.

"Even without any funding from the Legislature, the committee decided that we will observe the Liberation Day on the actual day, July 4th," he said.

Henry Hofschneider, special adviser to Flores, said during Friday's briefing that the decision to hold a one-day celebration will "save everyone time, effort, and resources."

Hofschneider said they "apologize" if they sounded upbeat by previously considering the idea of celebrating the biggest community event for a whole month.

"We weren't trying to make it lavish," he explained. "The CNMI people deserve the best, even when the economy is down. Making it a monthlong celebration was never finalized because we knew the money was an issue."

Hofschneider added, "We're just trying to put together something that the community can enjoy."

Both Hofschneider and Flores said this year's event will still feature the usual activities such as the Liberation Day parade, the float competition, and the Liberation Queen pageant.

Flores disclosed that the committee has yet to decide between the Civic Center and the Hopwood Jr. High School for the actual venue of the festivities. Whichever location is chosen, Flores said they are looking at starting the parade by the Mount Carmel Cathedral grounds.

He said the celebration is tentatively set from 6am to 6pm so that the Mayor's Office will not incur any expenses like utilities since no funding, not even from his office's own appropriation, will be used for the event.

"I don't want to sacrifice the services we provide to the community by using these public funds," he said.

Flores said the committee will solicit from the business community for assistance. "We're going to ask for their help because there won't be any public funds expended other than our employees' time."

'No more begging'

Hofschneider emphasized that the Fourth of July celebration will push through with or without help from the Legislature.

"I think enough has been said and now it's time to move on," he said.

According to Hofschneider, the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation called for a meeting at 9am today to discuss this year's Liberation Day event.

He lamented that a notice of the meeting was issued to delegation members but not to the Liberation committee and to Flores personally or in his official capacity.

Hofschneider said neither the mayor nor the committee plans to attend the meeting since they already informed the delegation about their request for assistance.

"If the delegation is willing to help and give us funds, then that will be welcome. But we won't be begging or asking them for assistance anymore," he added.

Flores pointed out that since he took over as mayor, the last two years' Liberation Day festivities did not use any public funds.

The Liberation committee raises money through solicitations from business establishments and other fundraising activities such as the Liberation Queen tickets and the raffle tickets.

Hofschneider recounted that in 2010, the delegation appropriated $45,000, which was line vetoed. Last year, $45,000 was also appropriated and the delegation assured that the Mayor's Office will be reimbursed. However, only $26,000 has been received to cover the 2011 Liberation Day expenses.

He maintained that the Mayor's Office will continue to spearhead the celebration provided that the Legislature authorize the mayor to raise revenues for the event.

According to Hofschneider, they already shared the idea with lawmakers less than two years ago and presented them a draft. However, they have yet to hear from the Legislature about their proposal.

"We invite the community, public officials as well, to help us celebrate Liberation Day. We continue to urge and ask for their support on this event," said Flores.

An, Chua lead junior high graduating class of MBA

EMILY AN
Highest Honor

DELANEY KYLE CHUA
A-Honor

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Emily An and Delaney Kyle Chua led the 2012 junior high school graduates of the Marianas Baptist Academy during its 25th Commencement Exercises at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Friday.

Of the 17 graduates, An was honored with the "Highest Honor" award while Chua was bestowed the A-Honor.

The junior high school graduates, along with the high school graduates, were awarded their diplomas by school president Yang Hoon Lee, principal and vice president Ramiro H. Trinidad, secretary/treasurer Leah R. Alfred, guest speaker Jennifer Dockter, Math teacher Tony Flores, and Science teacher Lorna Liban.

The 13-year-old An is the older of two children of Lee Tae-Kyung and An Min Ho. She has joined various competitions such as the Academic Challenge Bowl, National Junior Forensic League, Mathcourt, and Geography Bee.

In an interview following Friday's ceremony, An said it took a lot of tears and hardships to achieve the highest honor in her class.

"I'm really thankful to my mom who helped me toward this goal, which is graduating the best in eighth grade," she said.

An also credited her teachers who taught her the "real world" by challenging her and giving her the important lesson of facing the consequences of her own choices and actions.

An, who plans to pursue high school studies also at MBA, said she found wonderful friends at MBA. "Trust your friends because they're always there for you. Always be grateful to your parents, no matter what they say," said An, adding that she plans to be more involved in community service in high school.

A-Honor awardee Chua is the second of three children of Celso and Nancy Chua of Gualo Rai. He has actively joined academic competitions, including NJFL and Mathcourt.

Chua, 12, revealed that it wasn't that difficult for him to graduate with honors. "It's very easy to get good grades if you study and focus in it," he told Saipan Tribune.

Chua acknowledged God, his family, and the school principal who were all instrumental in his academic success. He plans to study high school either in MBA or at Saipan Southern High School.

Other junior high school graduates this year are James Christopher Calma, Yi Jun Chen, Eden Abigail Deang, Henry Kyle Hofschneider, Ki Youn Kim, Myoung Ki Oh, Robert Ismael Solis, John Michael Arugay, Gary Chan, Daniel Han, Joel Jang, You Na Lee, Debby Siu, Shizuka Takayama, and Andrei Stephen Woodruff.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The new officers of the CNMI Library Council are, from left, vice chair Mark Olopai Rabauliman, treasurer and Finance Committee chair Soledad Tenorio, council chair Hermina Matsumoto Fusco, Policy Committee chair Anna Cabrera Baer, and secretary and Program Committee chair Frank Castro Villagomez. Not in photo is member Paz Castro Younis, who is off-island.

CNMI Library Council elects new officers

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The CNMI Library Council elected a new set of officers during its first regular meeting held on May 15.

Herminia M. Fusco, whose four-year reappointment to the council expires on April 21, 2016, will now serve as chair, replacing Jose T. Limes.

Limes' spot on the council was filled by Mark O. Rabauliman, who was elected vice chair and will serve the council also until April 21, 2016.

The new secretary and Program Committee chair is Frank C. Villagomez, who was also re-appointed to the council to serve another four-year term expiring in 2016.

Soledad Tenorio, who was elected treasurer, replaces vice chair Frannie Tenorio and will also serve a four-year term. She is also the head of the Finance Committee.

Other council members are Anna C. Baer and Paz C. Younis, whose terms will expire in December. Baer currently chairs the Policy Committee.

Executive director John Oliver Gonzales of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library expressed excitement that the new council is composed of members of the third generation of the Kiyu and Tenorio families, both of whom are the major donors of the CNMI's state library.

"We are thrilled at the great combination of experiences and passion of these new members, which will help strengthen our public libraries into the 21st century," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

According to Gonzales, having the new council members and officers on board is timely as they will mark the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's 20-year milestone in December.

"We need their leadership and guidance to ensure that all our public libraries will maintain the vast literary programs we offer and continue serving our patrons on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," he added.

HANMI

AIRLINE TICKET DONATION

Saipan Air general manager Aurelia Kretzers, second from right, donates two roundtrip airline tickets for the 11th Annual HANMI Charity Golf Classic Tournament on June 2, 2012, at Marianas Resort. Receiving Saipan Air's donation is Golf Committee chair Takahiro Omori, third from right. Proceeds of the tournament will go toward charitable organizations in the Northern Marianas.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulation to out little man, Jeremiah Suel III (Bobboi), on your graduation today. We love you very much! May this be the beginning of many more bright and successful days ahead. Greetings coming out from Mom, Dad, and your loving family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HOLE-IN-ONE PRIZES

Jay Santos of Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods, center, and Nick Lizama of Triple J Motors, right, pledge two Hyundai Accents as hole-in-one prizes for the 11th Annual HANMI Charity Golf Classic Tournament on June 2, 2012, at the Marianas Resort. Receiving their sponsorship pledge is HANMI chair Nick Nishikawa, left. Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods is joined by Hertz Rent-a-car in their sponsorship.

HANMI

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

May 29, 2000

PSS gets $154K fed grant via Internet

Commissioner of Education Rita Hocog Inos has announced that the PSS has successfully completed its first Internet application for federal funds. The PSS has been electronically notified by the Federal Transit Administration that its first all electronic application for federal funds has been awarded. The PSS now has access again to $154,000 in federal funds that will be used to pay for the leases on the 13 busses procured by the PSS in 1996. As those annual payments amount to $145,000, the federal money is sufficient to assure that the PSS will not need to use CNMI dollars to meet the lease costs. Receiving these funds via Internet also underscores the future of transacting grants with federal agencies.

CNMI seeks funding to boost reading program

The local education sector has applied for additional federal funding of $100,000 which is envisioned to boost the reading program in the Northern Marianas. While the Public School System awaits the approval of the FY 2000 budget package, Education Commissioner Rita H. Inos said PSS still wants to tap federal money for this purpose through the Reading Excellence program offered by the U.S. Department of Education. Should the CNMI gets these federal resource, PSS would be able to put in place new reading strategies in its program for kindergarten through third grade students.

May 29, 2001

Businessman defends Splash Island relocation

Sea Ventures Island, Inc. President Anthony Pellegrino deplored a recent National Park Service report on Splash Island, claiming it was copied from a manual and was conducted without proper investigation. Mr. Pellegrino questioned claims that the Splash Island will be detrimental to the aesthetic and soundscape value of the American Memorial Park, "when it only rises as high as a meter above the water, not counting the eight-foot tall water slide." The businessman also defended that Splash Island would not affect the soundscape of the park because it is moored a "good" mile away from its shore.

Saipan aircraft traffic soar 8%

International aircraft traffic to the Northern Marianas increased eight percent in March 2001 to 289 flights from last year of the same month's 267, according to the Commonwealth Ports Authority. This came even in the wake of Mandarin Airlines' suspension of nonstop flights between Saipan and Taipei in March, which was anticipated to cost CPA an average monthly revenue of $4,000. International arrivals at the Saipan airport soared 13 percent during the same period to 44,110 passengers from March last year's 38,968 passengers. Departure figures increased two percent from 43,642 to 44,482 passengers.

May 29, 2002

Army Corps to foot $1.7M in ports projects

Efforts to upgrade the Tinian and Rota harbors took a step closer to reality after the CNMI government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agreed during preliminary discussions yesterday to pool a total of $2.6 million for the next phase, which is to conduct a feasibility study for both projects. Of the amount, the CNMI government would only foot $900,000, while the Corps would shoulder the remaining $1.7 million, or more than 65 percent of the cost for the study. This comes soon after Jim Hatashima of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers disclosed that the Corps's headquarters in Washington D.C. finally approved about three weeks ago the reconnaissance report on the two projects.

Possible deficit spending prompts House to shelve joint resolution

The House of Representatives has decided, for the moment, to sit on a joint resolution that would have granted Gov. Juan N. Babauta the authority to reprogram government money in excess of the 25 percent statutory limit. House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider said that, although both the House and the Senate have already passed House Joint Resolution 13-5, the House opted to recall the measure for two reasons. "First, the joint resolution was ill drafted. Second, because of recent contradictions between the Executive Branch's actions and the positions of the House or the Executive Branch's inconsistent application of a particular public policy," he said.

IN CHALLENGE TO CW FINAL RULE

DOJ counsel: Group seem uninterested in pursuing case

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A group of individuals that is suing Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and other federal officials over the implementation and enforcement of the CNMI-only transitional worker Final Rule does not seem to be interested in pursuing the lawsuit, according to a senior U.S. Department of Justice lawyer.

Theodore W. Atkinson of the DOJ's Civil Division has informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI that the cost of flying from Washington D.C. to Saipan for the hearing is not justified since the plaintiffs do not appear to be interested in pursuing their case.

Once Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona denied the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary hearing injunction, Atkinson said his clients (Napolitano and others) granted their four separate extensions of time to file an amended complaint.

"To date, plaintiffs have not amended their complaint," said Atkinson in a telephonic conference call filed last week.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments yesterday from attorney Stephen Woodruff, counsel for plaintiffs, but he had yet to reply as of press time.

The plaintiffs in the case are Bonifacio V. Sagana, Manuel T. Vilaga, Gerardo G. De Guzman, Hector T. Sevilla, Carlito J. Marquez, Eduardo M. Elenzano, and Jong Ho Lee.

The respondents are DHS Secretary Napolitano, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services District Director David Gulick, U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis, and U.S. Department of Labor District Director Terrence Trotter.

The plaintiffs' lawsuit challenges the implementation and enforcement of the CW Final Rule, which according to Woodruff, is both procedurally and substantially defective.

Atkinson said the respondents requested the court to permit him to participate in the hearing on their motion to dismiss or, in the alternative, for summary judgment, by telephone.

Additionally, Atkinson said, the respondents' motion to dismiss stands unopposed, even through a response to the motion was due nearly two weeks ago.

The plaintiffs' response to the motion to dismiss was due on May 10, 2012.

VOLUNTEERS ALL CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hardworking volunteers complete the painting of the Tanapag Social Center (background) this past weekend. Front row from left: Dina Kaliga, Ann Perry, and Bill Lieto. Back row from left: Nolas Kaliga Manny Borja, Tony Angello, and Francisco Aguon.

Atkinson said that Woodruff contacted him shortly after the respondents' motion was filed, but has not contacted him to inform him that he needed more time to file a response.

Finally, Atkinson said, even if a hearing does go forward on the respondents' as-yet unopposed motion, the issues are straightforward.

He pointed out that Manglona has already considered the merits of this case at length with respect to the motion for a preliminary injunction. Manglona, he noted, has concluded that plaintiffs are not likely to succeed on the merits of their claims.

Atkinson said the May 31 hearing will not require a presentation of evidence but will rest on oral argument alone. "Under these circumstances, respondents' participation by telephone is warranted," he said.

Manglona on Thursday granted Atkinson's request to appear at the hearing via telephonic conference.

On Dec 30, 2011, Manglona denied the plaintiffs' motion to extend the period during which nonresident workers would be eligible for CNMI-only transitional worker status.

"Notwithstanding the balance of harms or how much the public interest would be served, given the unlikelihood that plaintiffs will succeed on the merits of their claim and the lack of irreparable harm due to the implementation of the Final Rule, the court concludes that plaintiffs have not established their entitlement to a preliminary injunction," Manglona had said.

PREL hosts Pacific climate workshop in American Sāmoa

HONOLULU, Hawai'i—The Pacific Climate Education Partnership expanded its educational reach by hosting a workshop in American Sāmoa titled, *Community Partnerships for Climate Change Education & Adaptation: May Day* on May 15, 2012.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness about climate issues in the Pacific, increase knowledge of collective work around climate change in American Sāmoa, and establish a network of partners and expertise in the field to connect with the PCEP partnership.

To coordinate the event, PREL worked with the University of Hawaii School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, American Sāmoa Department of Education, and Le Tausagi, a group of environmental educators working for government agencies that provide environmental outreach in American Sāmoa.

Over 40 members of the community attended the workshop—teachers, researchers, and leaders—from over 14 organizations including: the American Sāmoa Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources; the American Sāmoa Department of Education; the American Sāmoa Community College; the American Sāmoa Power Authority; the NOAA Fisheries; the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; the American Sāmoa Department of Agriculture; the U.S. National Parks Service; and the Coral Reef Advisory Group.

The PCEP is a collaborative network of Pacific island communities and organizations responding to the impacts of climate change in the Pacific region. Funded by the National Science Foundation, this partnership works specifically in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific islands of Hawai'i, American Sāmoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap), and the Republic of Palau.

PREL and WestEd lead the PCEP, working with community agencies, colleges, education departments, teachers, and principals, to develop a 5-year strategic plan that supports teaching and learning about climate change and its impacts.

To learn more about the PCEP, and connect with its network of climate educators from around the Pacific, join the Pacific island Educators Advocating for Climate Education (PEACE) email list at: [*http://lists.prel.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/peace*]. Contribute to the PCEP wiki, a collaborative resource on climate and climate change in the Pacific, at: [http://pcep.wikispaces.com]. Or, visit the PCEP website at: [*http://pcep.dsp.wested.org/*]. ***(PREL)***

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– Dr. Rita Hocog Inos RJSHS
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12th Grade Tinian High School

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Facebook's lucky friends?

Facebook has made a habit of advancing its interests at the expense of its customers, whether by weakening its privacy policy, tracking users' movements around the Web or radically reconfiguring the way information is displayed on the site's pages. So it probably shouldn't surprise anyone that while the company's initial stock offering was a boon to the company and insiders, it's been a costly disappointment for the general public. Now, some investors are accusing the company and its bankers of playing the public for suckers, sharing pessimistic revenue projections with a few insiders but not average investors. It's an accusation that has drawn the attention of Congress and federal regulators, and it's serious enough to merit a thorough investigation.

It's not entirely clear why Facebook went public. Investors and employees who owned a share of the company's equity could sell it on private markets, and the company's prospectus stated that it had no pressing need for the funds. The nearly $7 billion it raised will be socked away along with almost $4 billion in cash reserves. The more obvious winners in the IPO were the venture capital firms and other early investors who cashed out a portion of their holdings; they collected more than $9 billion.

But early buyers of the new stock paid up to $42 per share, only to see the value plummet before recovering slightly on Wednesday. Reports soon emerged that one or more of the banks underwriting the IPO had lowered their estimates of Facebook's expected earnings, and had shared these warnings with some of their clients. The implication is that some large investors knew enough to stay away from the IPO, or to sell their holdings quickly to buyers who weren't privy to the latest analysis.

Facebook and Morgan Stanley, the lead underwriter of the IPO, deny that they did anything wrong or even unusual. And although the underwriters' lower estimates weren't made available to the public, the financial media caught wind of the warnings and reported on them before the stock went on sale. In fact, much of the coverage leading up to the IPO was negative, with plenty of skepticism expressed about the company's revenues ever being large enough to justify the stock's price.

There is a difference, however, between the information that gets bruited about in the media and what companies and their underwriters officially disclose. If insiders disclose information that's significant enough to influence investors, securities law requires that they share it with everyone, not just a favored few. That's why regulators should find out exactly what Facebook said to its underwriters that led to their revised estimates, and whether those banks revealed information to a few that should have been disclosed to all.

Ultimately, Facebook's share price will rise or fall with the company's ability to mine its enormous user base for significantly more revenue than it does today. In the meantime, though, regulators should make sure that those who choose to bet on the company have the same information as everyone else at the table.

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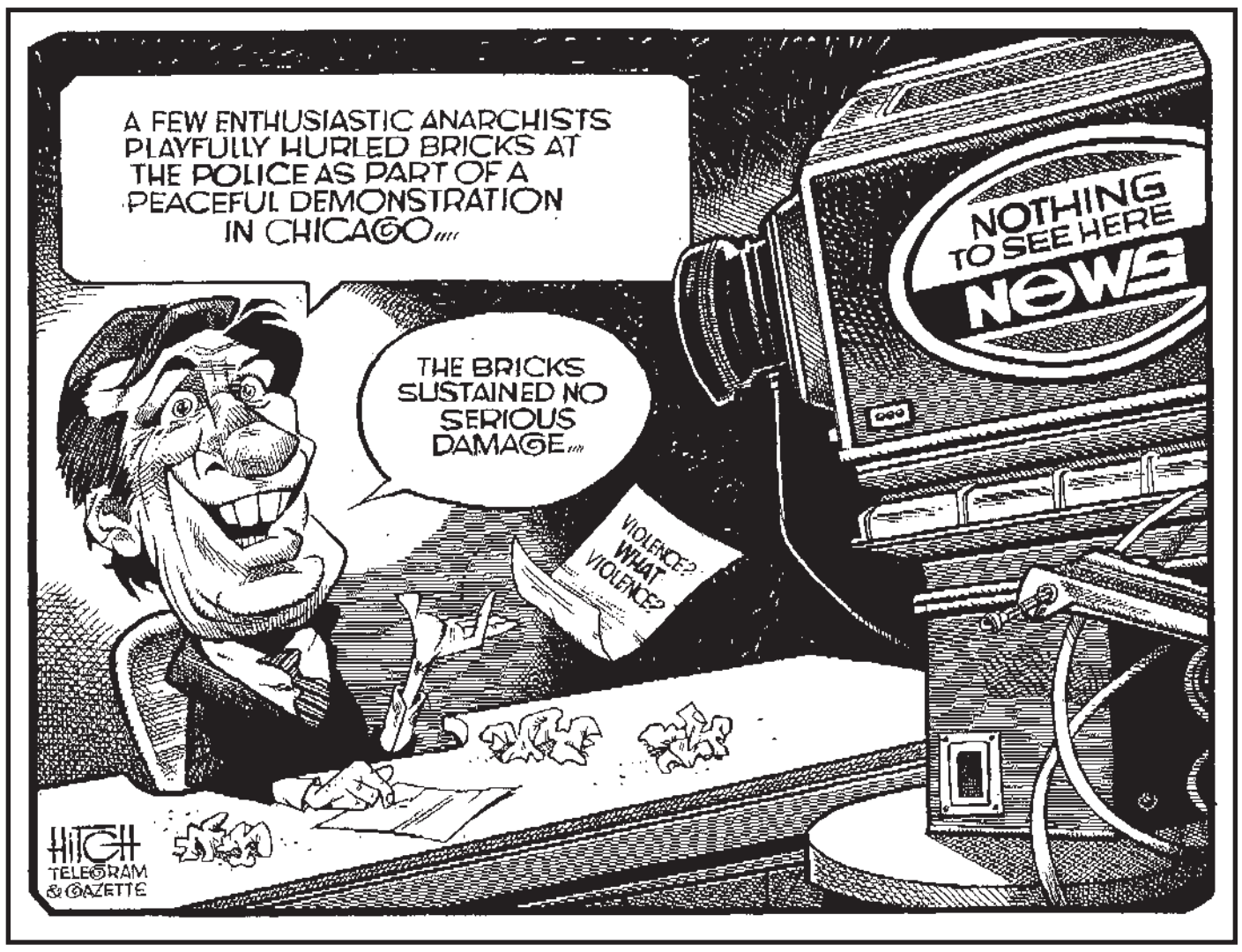
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VIOLENCE? WHAT VIOLENCE?
NOTHING TO SEE HERE
NEWS
HITCH
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Killing al-Qaida's leaders: It works

By ROBIN SIMCOX
Los Angeles Times

Robin Simcox is a research fellow at the Henry Jackson Society in London and the co-author of Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections. *He wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

In the year since President Obama approved a successful raid against Osama bin Laden, public opinion has been shifting. While many Westerners still celebrate the targeted killing—along with the killing several months later of Anwar Awlaki—some are expressing doubts.

European politicians, human rights lawyers and members of some East Coast think tanks have posited that these terrorists were actually more dangerous dead than alive. Death, the reasoning goes, martyred the leaders, thus immortalizing their ideas and appeal. Furthermore, the critics say, killing al-Qaida leaders has had little strategic effect because the group can quickly replenish its ranks with able deputies.

This is false. Though al-Qaida finds it easy enough to replace mid-level commanders and foot soldiers, some of its top leaders are virtually irreplaceable. America has made great progress against al-Qaida precisely because its strategy has been to go after high-value targets.

Take bin Laden. The al-Qaida leader possessed a combination of qualities that set him apart from all others in the wider jihadist movement. He had theological legitimacy, inspiring thousands of Muslims to fight and die on his behalf. And he was able to attract disparate jihadist groups into the al-Qaida tent, including Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, and Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad.

Bin Laden built his military credibility in Afghanistan, where he provided economic and tactical support to the mujahedin during the 1980s and oversaw the creation of jihadist training camps during the 1990s. What cemented bin Laden's reputation, though, was the trio of devastating attacks on U.S. targets he orchestrated: the East African embassy bombings in August 1998, the bombing of the destroyer Cole in 2000 and the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington.

While in hiding after the attacks, Bin Laden remained fixated on striking the U.S. again. He clearly understood that for his group to retain transnational relevance and potency, it could not restrict its operations to the Middle East. It is unclear whether bin Laden's replacement, Ayman Zawahiri, places as much priority on this.

Bin Laden is simply not replaceable. The idea that Obama made a strategic misstep by killing a man responsible for the death of thousands of U.S. citizens and committed to killing thousands more is absurd. Rather than making him a martyr, bin Laden's killing demonstrated that he was, like the rest of us, mortal. And it warned terrorists everywhere that targeting U.S. citizens will bring retribution.

The killing of Awlaki, an American citizen, further illustrates why targeting certain al-Qaida leaders is an excellent strategy. Operationally, Awlaki was not a huge loss to al-Qaida. He had no military reputation to speak of. But he was an eloquent English-speaking lecturer, able to effectively reach out to Western Muslims and urge them to attack their homelands. He provided theological justification for jihad to the failed Christmas Day bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, and he was in direct email contact with the Fort Hood shooter Nidal Malik Hasan. There is no Awlaki replacement within al-Qaida's ranks. His death in September 2011 has, at least for now, limited the group's ability to get persuasive messages out to Western Muslims.

Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who was captured in 2003 and is imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay, is proof that the detention of high-value targets, though not always possible, is also an effective counter-terrorism measure. Al-Qaida was so reliant on Mohammed's plans that variations of attacks he thought up in the early 1990s were being implemented as late as 2006. His reputation among jihadists for having conceived and coordinated the Sept. 11 attacks hasn't been rivaled, and taking him out of action dealt a devastating blow to al-Qaida.

Moreover, there is a cumulative effect. Removing so many key players has caused a creative stagnation within al-Qaida that has been only partly offset by the growth of al-Qaida in Yemen. That group has been increasingly active in recent years, attempting to bring down planes by placing a bomb in the underwear of Abdulmutallab in 2009 and by using explosives concealed in printer cartridges in 2010. Both plots apparently unfolded without U.S. intelligence discovering them, yet neither succeeded in taking lives.

This month, the U.S. foiled another bomb plot emanating from Yemen. Ibrahim Hassan Asiri (described by one former CIA officer as al-Qaida's genius bomb-maker) had constructed a device aimed at defeating new airport precautions. Asiri was also responsible for the underwear bomb used by Abdulmutallab. Because Asiri has undoubtedly passed instruction on to others, killing him would not entirely eradicate the threat, but it would be a good start. There is every reason for the U.S to target him.

Killing senior al-Qaida leaders doesn't just remove enemies from the battlefield; it also erases institutional knowledge and experience. Some followers may consider the targeted leaders to be martyrs. But that doesn't change the fact that their deaths are bad for al-Qaida. By killing the group's elite leaders, the U.S. is not contributing to al-Qaida's mythology but destroying it.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The China syndrome

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) previously taught at San Vicente Elementary School on Saipan and is currently a guest lecturer at Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

It was a movie in my youth (Jack Lemmon later received a Best Actor Oscar for his performance as the tragic lead character). I did not understand why it was titled the *China Syndrome* then, but later I learned that the metaphor for a nuclear meltdown includes a boring through to the planet's core, and since the antipode to the United States where the movie on a fictitious nuclear accident was set is China, ergo, the title.

We focus on today's China, Obama's whipping boy, distracting those lamenting the imminent physical end to our warmongering presence in the Middle East. We drool over the rich but critically unexploited Stans' treasures of Central Asia but our famously 'socialist' President abandons the gravy and feigns a warlike posture toward China.

China understands the art of facades, so Washington D.C.'s posturing is taken in stride, an understandable political necessity publicly staged but gingerly mentioned in serious foreign policy pronouncements.

The continuing sale of fighter planes to Taiwan is profitable for the U.S. military-industrial complex, and since the annual discretionary budget now claims 60 percent in military expenditures, maintaining commerce kin to the Department of Defense (previously named "Dept. of War") is good for AmCham!

Anything Chinese seem of interest to Fox News, especially when the item is jaded, blowing it out of proportion to sizes usually accorded superstars.

Dating USC Trojan international graduate students Ying Wu and Ming Qu had the windshield of their BMW shattered by a bullet shortly after midnight in April in a botched carjack attempt.

USC in L.A. has the highest contingent of international students among U.S. schools of higher learning; 19 percent of the 38K students are foreign students, 2,500 from China. Heightened interest in the case is understandable, but now it has taken partisan tint.

Already, blogs bewail the "liberal" media's indifference to the racial identity of Javier Bolden, 19, and Bryan Barnes, 20, (rumored to be of African-American descent) arrested Friday on suspicion of killing the students, comparing and contrasting George Zimmerman's publicity for being allegedly a white supremacist in the Trayvon Martin case!

Then there is Chen Guangcheng, the blind civil rights lawyer who escaped Shandong Province and found welcome in Beijing's U.S. Embassy compound, finally making it to NYC on a negotiated study leave with his wife and two children. His fame came from being pegged by *Time* magazine as one of the world's 100 influential persons of 2006. We are sympathetic to his cause, admire his tenacity and capability as a self-taught lawyer. It does not hurt to look like Tom Cruise in those shades! Can Hollywood be too far behind?

Already leery about being pigskin in political football, poor Chen found himself in the middle of one. Now to be tucked into a U.S. University fellowship, we do not expect to see Chen influence the practice of law in China anytime soon. But he will be high profile fodder for both the conservative and liberal press!

Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao's efforts to expand the rule of law into all facets of China's existence have a long way to go. Sadly, Mao's revolution could not keep the recalcitrant cognoscenti from resurging for they rule the social strata of privilege. The world's rarified oligarchy—1 percent of population owning 40 percent of the world's wealth—is no consolation! Proletarians of the world will just stay poor!

The Wenzhou's Wall Street debacle, once touted as a model of free enterprise after Deng Xiaopeng opened Zhongguo's market gates, came as no surprise. This Zhejiang province center south of Shanghai, north of the notorious Fujian province (where the infamous Tongs caricatured in Fu Manchu movies still exist), traces its genesis to the 19th century when it raised capital for China's industries.

Deng's loosening of controls allowed it to manipulate capital's supply and demand with some corrupt collusion in high places that fed frenzied growth, bottoming out when the global economic bubble burst in the same way as its Ponzi-like cousins worldwide.

Energetic 31-year-old Wu Ying started a hair saloon, engaged in rapid fund raising, and before long, her business empire included numerous shops and hotels. Three years ago, the questioned tycoon too green and too thinly protected to fend for herself, underwent legal accounting, and she earned a suspended capital judgment in court for blatantly bending the law, but her trial revealed a broader malaise that left Wenzhou dubbed as the land of disappearing bosses. Investors abandoned offices and factory managers just up-and-left their posts, leaving workers in unprofitable operations, unsellable inventories, and unmarketable services.

Already threatened by inflation, IMF cautions Beijing on its economic health. The global meltdown is hardly nuclear, but China remains the convenient whipping boy. Beijing so far has kept the Wenzhou bubble from bursting, particularly in overpriced housing. With the Wanda Dalian group getting into the global net with its recent acquisition of the AMC movie theaters, the Qu, Wu, Chen and Wu media show will be in the China Syndrome marquee awhile.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The end of law in the CNMI

Let's have a little review of what law is. We should all be familiar with the process: the Legislature passes a bill and the governor signs it into law. What we are not familiar with is the legal concept of precedence. Only when a law is challenged in court and a judge makes a decision does the legal system have something to work with. For example, you leave a family party, unknowing that someone has left an open beer in the back seat. You get stopped by the police and you are arrested under the open container law (many states have this law, I don't know if we do). In court the judge finds you *not* guilty because a judge before him decided that some other person could not reach the open beer in the back seat, therefore because of that precedent you are free to go too.

Let's apply this to retirement! A big jump, I know, but follow along. Retirement was created and put into existence by *law*. It said that everyone who worked for the CNMI government *had* to pay into the system. This was *forced* on every employee, they had their money taken and they had *no* choice! The *law* also said employees who worked 20 *years* or more would get a fixed retirement until they die. It specifically directed that benefits could be increased, but *not* decreased. So now in a budget crunch, lawmakers want to violate the law and reduce the retirees' benefits. If our lawmakers break the law of retirement, then what precedent will be set? Can a retiree that has faithfully (not by choice, remember) paid into retirement the better part of their whole life (20 years or more) then say, "I don't have to pay any taxes because if the government doesn't have to follow the law then neither do I!" Can anyone then say, "I can steal from you because the government set the precedent that they can steal from retirement." How far will it go?

The late senator Jesus Mafnas proved that retirees are the biggest voting bloc in the CNMI. I think it is time to reassert that fact and elect a group of people that follow the law. The fact that the retiree was forced to pay retirement for 20 or more years believing in the law that said they would not have their retirement cut should *not* even be considered for reduction in any budget crunch. Rep. Joseph Palacios is a true leader. He proposed to cut the number of Saipan legislators, not retirees.

No other person in or associated with the CNMI government has the same vested interest as a retiree. Although I am certainly not opposed to a review of retirees who have received benefits *without paying for them* for 20 years or more, I am opposed to any reduction of properly earned retirement benefits. Faith in the CNMI government is on the line here and we certainly *do not* want to be labeled with a spoof of Guam's motto, "CNMI, where America's bankruptcy begins!"

Michael Murphy
Kagman, Saipan

Ill-conceived resolution

I recently read *Tribune*'s article, "Resolution want proper recognition of Challenger Deep site," and was disturbed that such a resolution was even conceived. A five-page resolution that seeks to give due credit to Guam and the CNMI for its proximity to the Challenger Deep site is ludicrous considering the challenges that the Legislature should be tackling, namely the Retirement Fund lawsuit, the instability of the local hospital, and the current woes at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., to name a few.

The site in the Marianas Trench known as Challenger Deep lies 178 miles northwest of Fais Island, one of the outer islands of Yap, and 189 miles southwest of Guam. This ill-conceived five-page resolution contests that Guam and the CNMI are not adequately attributed in the world media, thereby decreasing the potential for profits. This is a futile attempt by ill-educated elected officials to divert resources and efforts to projects that have no bearing on the fate of the CNMI.

By law, Guam and the CNMI have no stake in possible profits from the exploration of the Mariana Trench. Any part of the Marianas Trench that falls within 200 nautical miles (mind you, nautical miles, not land miles) from Guam or the CNMI falls within the United States' exclusive economic zone, thus granting profit rights to the U.S. alone, unless some agreement is conceived between Guam or the CNMI with the United States. Judging from the mere distance to Fais Island, the Federated States of Micronesia actually has more of a right to claim profits from Challenger Deeps explorations than Guam or the CNMI.

To our elected officials, please show some discipline and focus your efforts on actual pressing issues facing our beloved CNMI, and leave your desire for 15 minutes of fame and a photo op with James Cameron at the door.

Christine T. Igisomar
Corpus Christi, Texas

Save us while you still can

Dear Reps. George Camacho, Ralph Sablan, Joseph De Leon Guerrero, Tony Sablan, and Frank Dela Cruz: For the sake of us active members who are also in jeopardy of losing everything, please reconsider and think about us. It is bad enough we worked for so long for this investment security and now we are not going to get it. At least return our money, while we are still willing to forgive you all for killing our lives.

We already know what we are losing, but you don't know what you have done to us. The cutting of the work hours, making us pay for fuel charge and now our retirement. Please, let us decide for ourselves where we want to go with our contributions. Don't use us again as your shield. Give us our money back and help the retirees. Let us go to Social Security and apply for it ourselves individually.

SSA is serving tons of people with worse problems than us. I don't think they'll entertain you, but we know they'll entertain us individually. Return our money please and take the remaining and help the retirees, because for sure SSA will entertain you for that. Your hope for negotiation to buy back with us in it is not going to go through. The only thing that will go through with SSA will be for those disabled, old, and underage dependants who can't work. As for the rest of the retirees, we suggest that either you give them their jobs back or start paying them the $300 million you owe them.

A relative in the mainland approached Social Security and they said the only thing that SSA will entertain will be the disabled, elderly, and underage dependants who have no other source of income. They said if the SSA allows able people to buy back, then it will create a problem with the U.S. government. So, remember, we are not a special people that Congress is going to waste their time to entertain. But I know they'll entertain for humanitarian reason the disabled, elderly and underage dependent with no other source of income.

Amend H.B. 17-226 to return our money 100 percent, stop the deductions, and help retirees transition to SS or put them back to work. At least with this plan you can collect the overpayment, and maybe in the future you can give us something for our share.

And to Rep. Eli Cabrera and those who voted yes, thank you. Now, I'm begging you to amend and return, otherwise explain so that we know what is your reason. Just make sure you follow the proper procedure when transitioning to SSA.

Jose DLC Atalig
San Jose Village, Tinian

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲88 ° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°

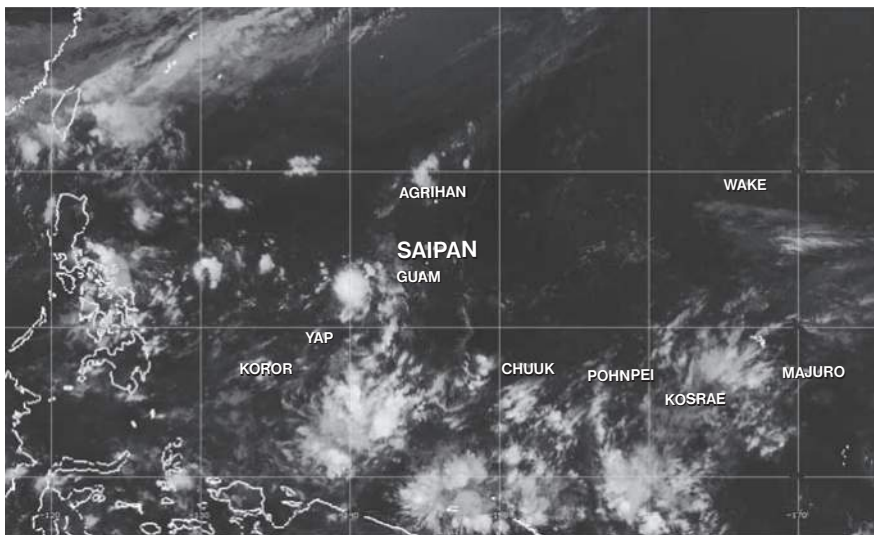
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲87	▼81
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼76
Yap	Showers	▲90	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼76
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲88	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲58	▼45
Beijing	Sunny	▲80	▼57
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲86	▼80
Honolulu	Sunny	▲84	▼74
London	Showers	▲75	▼56
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲72	▼58
Manila	Thundershowers	▲91	▼82
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼42
Miami	Thundershowers	▲86	▼76
New York	Thundershowers	▲86	▼70
Osaka	Cloudy	▲77	▼60
Paris	Sunny	▲78	▼55
Pusan	Cloudy	▲71	▼63
Rome	Sunny	▲75	▼56
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲71	▼49
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼50
Seoul	Showers	▲80	▼62
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲73	▼61
Washington, DC	Thundershowers	▲88	▼74

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MAY 28, 2012

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough extends eastward from 11N130E to a weak circulation located north of Palau near 12N135E to end close to Ulithi at 10N140E. Convergence near the trough is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms to the southwest of Guam between 11N and 14N from 138E to 142E and northwest of Yap between 13N and 15N from 130E to 135E. Another surface trough extends from 17N131E to 21N134E is combining with an upper-level trough in the same area to produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within an area bounded by 17N132E to 19N130E to 21N131E to 21N138E back to 17N132E. A third surface trough stretches from near 5N140E through a circulation located southwest of Chuuk near 4N145E and continues southeastward to a second circulation located south of Pohnpei near 1N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the trough and circulations can be found between the equator and 6N from 138E to 145E between 5N and 9N from 142E to 149E and between the equator and 5N from 150E to 160E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers south of Kwajalein between 5N and 8N from 166E to 168E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:50 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
9:19 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
2:17 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
8:43 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:46 AM	6:43 PM
Wednesday	5:46 AM	6:43 PM
Thursday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Friday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Saturday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:30 PM	12:13 AM
Wednesday	1:25 PM	12:56 AM
Thursday	2:22 PM	1:39 AM
Friday	3:22 PM	2:26 AM
Saturday	4:24 PM	3:16 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 6, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA5062	2:40am	3:10am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
UA5062	3:40am	4:15am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA5062	4:50am	5:40am	1, 5
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA5074	11:30pm	12:20pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076	3:10pm	4:00pm	Daily
UA5078	6:50pm	7:40pm	Daily
UA5072	9:55pm	10:45pm	Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:05am	8:50am	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:30pm	6:55pm	Daily
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:50am	11:05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/191	4:35am	9:55am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:05am	10:15pm	Daily via NRT
UA5076/183	3:10pm	8:45pm	Daily via GUM
UA5076/193	3:10pm	10:25pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:30pm	10:45pm	Daily via ICN
UA5072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
UA5072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:20am	11:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:50am	11:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5076/147	4:35pm	9:45pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:30pm	10:40pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
UA5062	3:40am	5:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA5064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA5062	2:40am	4:15am	1, 5 via ROP
UA5071	7:10am	8:00am	Daily
UA5073	10:05am	10:55am	Daily
UA5075	1:45pm	2:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5077	5:25pm	6:15pm	Daily
UA5079	8:35pm	9:25pm	Daily
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:15pm	12:50am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	8:50am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
DL172/288	8:05am	12:50am+1	Daily via NRT
UA190/5077	10:55am	6:15pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:55am	9:25pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
UA192/5071	9:45pm	8:00am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:00am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	11:25pm	8:00am+1	2, 5 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:45pm	2:20pm+1	Daily via ICN
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
UA180/5076	10:35pm	8:00am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; UA: United; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Memorial Day

Attendees of the Memorial Day ceremony check out the names and photos of the fallen servicemembers from the CNMI, which were displayed at the venue.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

A man and woman offer silent prayers by the grave of a fallen soldier as a member of the Manta Ray JROTC Battalion from Saipan Southern High School looks on.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

A woman offers a flower by the burial place of a family member at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery.

A female member of the JROTC Manta Ray Battalion leads island leaders and active servicemembers as they make their way to lay a wreath during the 2012 Memorial Day ceremony held at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery yesterday.

Two youngsters take their turn to offer flowers by the tomb of another fallen hero.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

The Marianas High School choir sings the national anthems during yesterday's event.

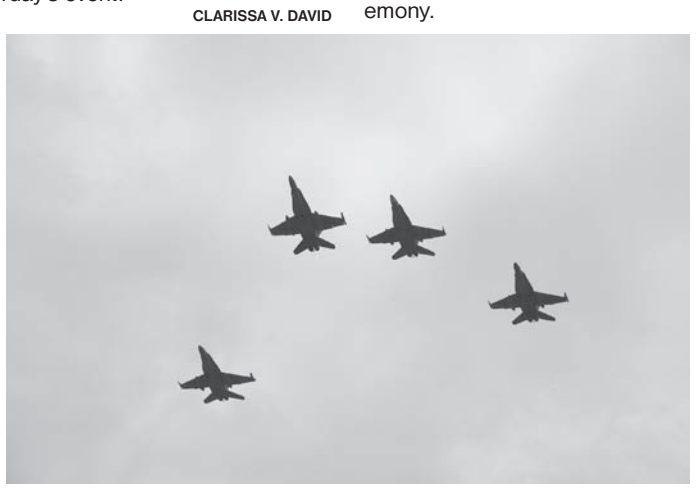
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Family members of the late Marine Lance Cpl. Ramon Taisacan Kaipat get their photo taken after the ceremony.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Dr. Edgar Tudor plays the bagpipe following yesterday's Memorial Day event.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



The Marine Aircraft Group 12 out of Iwakuni Japan does an F-18 flyover at about 11am.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Children are seen playing at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery grounds yesterday morning.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Tinian High School JROTC cadets prepare to lay the wreath, while U.S. Marines are in formation in the background during Memorial Day on Tinian yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A Tinian man gets a taste of what it's like to become a U.S. Marine firefighter on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Hundreds of Tinian residents and visitors join U.S. Marines for a group photo at a historic Memorial Day ceremony on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A Tinian boy tries out a pull up bar as U.S. Marines look on during yesterday's historic Memorial Day ceremony and "Friendship Day" on the island's North Field.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A U.S. Marine flexes his muscle at a pull up bar as his fellow Marines and Tinian children look on during "Friendship Day" and Memorial Day yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Lt. Col. Michael Taylor, commanding officer of Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 that's leading the ongoing Exercise Geiger Fury on Tinian, delivers his remarks as Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz looks on during a Memorial Day ceremony on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Four F-18s in a "Missing Man Formation" wows the large crowd on Tinian in observance of Memorial Day on North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Tinian residents and guests wave miniature American flags as they join U.S. Marines for a group photo at a historic Memorial Day ceremony on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Two U.S. Marines secure service flags on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A U.S. Marine assists a Tinian boy in wearing full military gear on Tinian's North Field yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Business

Some states asking the tax man to get tougher

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP)—Dentist Frank Illuzzi was stunned when Vermont tax collectors began demanding a 6 percent sales tax on the value of toothbrushes and floss he hands out to patients. Senior care facility operator Jay Grimes was similarly surprised to get a $350,000 bill slapping a 9 percent restaurant tax on the meals served to residents in the dining room. Landscaper Richard "Buckwheat" Lowe got $18,000 in bills taxing him for the first time ever on the mulch he sells.

Vermont is among a handful of cash-strapped states getting more aggressive about collecting every tax owed—hiring more collectors, hounding scofflaws and exploiting corners of their tax laws that haven't been enforced in years. It's an effort to avoid what politicians from both parties are dead set against: raising taxes.

"You don't want to raise taxes until you're very sure the taxes that people are supposed to pay are being paid," said Rep. Janet Ancel, chairwoman of Vermont's House Ways and Means Committee.

Under adamant no-new-tax Democratic Gov. Peter Shumlin, Vermont has added about 10 new tax compliance auditors and has stepped up efforts to scour records in rural areas, and add greater scrutiny to businesses ranging from auctioneers to Internet-based cloud-computing services.

But for all its aggressiveness, Vermont's results have been mixed. The state reaped about $57 million during the 12 months that ended in June, up from about $50 million five years earlier—a net gain of $7 million. That's a tiny fraction of the state's $1.3 billion general fund, but it has helped lawmakers close a budget gap that at the beginning of this year was projected to be $46 million.

Other states have had much more success.

Idaho hired 48 temporary auditors and collectors in fiscal 2011 as part of Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter's effort to boost revenues without raising taxes and narrow the so-called "tax gap"—the amount of taxes in the state that are due but go unpaid, either by error or by intent.

The added staff brought in more than $26.3 million, more than double the original estimate of $11.5 million. All the positions were made permanent this fiscal year.

AP

In this May 17, 2012 photo, Richard Lowe loads a truck with mulch in Morrisville, Vt. Nursery owners and landscapers around Vermont have been getting big bills from the state recently for unpaid sales taxes on products like bark mulch and soil additives that many thought had an agricultural exemption from the 6 percent levy.

Idaho's additional tax receipts are just a sliver of its roughly $2.7 billion budget, but they helped the state post a budget surplus for the first year since the Great Recession began in 2008, money that helped give state workers their first raises in five years.

Oklahoma added about 30 people to its tax collection staff since 2010 in an effort to help close a $900 million budget shortfall. The state collected nearly $35 million in delinquent taxes during the 12 months that ended in June, and overall sales tax revenues jumped by about $159 million from the first 10 months of fiscal 2011 to the same period in fiscal 2012.

States have a variety of strategies for following up when audits find tax scofflaws. One tactic in California is public shaming: The state publishes lists of individuals and businesses behind on income or sales taxes.

Others take a kinder approach. New York responded to the recent recession by stepping up its program to forgive parts of back payments due from taxpayers in economic distress.

Gale Garriott, executive director of the Federation of Tax Administrators, a Washington-based group that tracks state tax policy, said the handful of states that have taken a tough approach by hiring more auditors have generally been rewarded with more revenue.

"The return on investment is quite good. They bring in several times more than their salaries," he said.

Vermont's get-tough approach, however, is measured in hard feelings as well as dollars. Some aggrieved taxpayers have been contacting lawmakers, and debates in which legislators try to rein in what some see as an overzealous tax department have become a regular occurrence.

Illuzzi, a Brattleboro dentist, complained to his brother, state Sen. Vincent Illuzzi, about the demands for sales tax on the free toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss he gave out.

He won an amendment to a tax bill just before the Legislature adjourned in early May—a bill Shumlin later signed into law—that exempts the dental goods from the sales tax.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Polls: Greek's pro-austerity parties gaining

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Four new opinion polls indicate that Greece's June 17 election could produce another hung parliament but that two mainstream parties that favor implementing Greece's bailout programs could be able to form a coalition government this time. The polls indicate that pro-bailout New Democracy party and anti-bailout Syriza would probably finish first and second again, but that New Democracy would win more seats in parliament than during the May 6 national election, allowing it to team up with Socialist PASOK in a governing coalition. The polls were published Sunday in the To Vima, Real News, Proto Thema and Eleftheros Typos newspapers.

Senator asks airlines to drop seat fee for kids

NEW YORK (AP)—Sen. Charles Schumer is urging airlines to allow families with young children to sit together without paying extra. The New York Democrat is reacting to an Associated Press story last week detailing how families this summer are going to find it harder to sit together without paying fees that can add up to hundreds of dollars over the original ticket price. "Children need access to their parents and parents need access to their children," Schumer said in a statement. "Unnecessary airline fees shouldn't serve as a literal barrier between mother and child." Since last year, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Frontier Airlines and United Airlines have increased the percent of seats they set aside for elite frequent fliers or customers willing to pay extra. Fees for the seats—on the aisle, next to windows, or with more legroom -vary, but typically cost $25 extra, each way.

US hail storm pounds new Ford Escape models

WASHINGTON (AP)—A vicious hail storm last month pounded thousands of Ford's popular new Escape SUVs as they awaited shipment to U.S. car dealerships. But the damage won't slow the roll-out of the new, highly anticipated model, the company said Sunday. The storm struck Louisville, Ky., April 28 and damaged about 3,500 Escapes, according to a report in the Louisville Courier-Journal. The cars are assembled at a nearby plant. The same storm disrupted horse races at Churchill Downs during a trial race for the Kentucky Derby. Todd Nissen, a Ford spokesman, would not confirm the number of cars that were damaged because the process of inspecting each vehicle is "a fairly time-consuming process."

Why that flat Facebook IPO isn't so bad after all

NEW YORK (AP)—The botched offering of Facebook stock has raised several troubling questions, but at least we don't have to worry about the one that plagues many IPOs: How are a few select investors able to buy in early at lower prices and then pocket huge profits when the trading frenzy begins?

Among the many apparent missteps in its public debut, Facebook is accused of setting an opening price that was too high. Instead of spiking on the first day, shares inched up just 23 cents, to $38.23. The stock has mostly fallen since.

But some IPO experts don't think this was problem at all.

"The debacle was not the IPO but all the whining by speculators who didn't make money," says Lise Buyer, who helps companies plan initial offerings. Says Jay Ritter, a finance professor at the University of Florida, "Selling something for what it's worth is the way most people think a market should work."

For all its flaws, the Facebook debut did fulfill the chief purpose of a stock offering- to raise money for a company to pay bills, buy rivals, invest and expand. That aim is often lost amid the inflated expectations accompanying high-profile debuts.

In an initial public offering, a company sells shares to investment banks at what's called an IPO price. Those investment banks, called underwriters, then turn around and sell the shares to big investors who've signaled they are willing to buy at the same price. The higher this initial price, the better because it means the company can raise more money. The much-anticipated pops on the first day of trading are mostly relevant to the big investors, not the company, since it has already pocketed the cash.

In fact, a big opening-day pop can suggest the company got rooked and could have set the IPO price higher and raked in more money.

Last year, several Internet IPOs soared 50 percent or more on their first days, recalling the Main Street excitement of dot-com offerings more than a decade ago. Shares of the online professional network LinkedIn, for instance, doubled in value on the first day.

"Some of the pops were excessive," says Ann Sherman, a DePaul University finance professor who feared another "IPO bubble" was brewing. Though disappointing to many, the flat Facebook debut came as a relief to her.

Whether Facebook blew it by committing the opposite sin—overpricing—is another issue. The stock closed Friday at $31.91, down 16 percent from its IPO price last week.

There are good reasons for pricing an IPO stock so it's almost assured a small first-day rise of, say, 10 percent or 15 percent. Companies going public tend to be young, small and risky. A "guaranteed" profit helps entice big mutual funds, hedge funds and other big traders to take a chance. Walloping those big first investors with losses on the first day can make them less likely to buy when a company needs to raise cash by selling stock again in a secondary offering.

Premier appeals to Ireland: Vote yes to EU treaty

DUBLIN (AP)—Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny made a nationally televised appeal Sunday to voters to support the European Union's fiscal treaty in a referendum this week, warning that rejection would send the signal that Ireland was not serious about tackling its deficits and was no longer a secure member of the euro currency.

Kenny said a "yes" verdict in Thursday's referendum was essential to ensure that Ireland could tap EU bailout funds in 2013, if necessary. Ireland's current EU-International Monetary Fund loans are due to run out by the end of next year, and the treaty specifies that only ratified members could access future EU loans.

"A strong `yes' vote will create the certainty and stability that our country needs to continue on the road to economic recovery. This treaty will not solve all of our problems, but it is one part of the solution," Kenny said in his 4-minute TV address to his debt-burdened nation of 4.5 million.

Ireland is the only nation among 25 signatories putting the deficit-fighting treaty to a national vote, and critics of the German-led push for austerity are hoping that Ireland's increasingly euro-skeptical voters reject the pact.

Treaty architects ensured that an Irish "no" could not veto progress elsewhere, stipulating that it would require formal ratification from just 12 countries to become law in those countries. And Kenny argued that an Irish rejection would do far and away the most damage to Ireland's own interests.

" Only a `yes' vote will give Ireland guaranteed access to Europe's permanent rescue fund, the European Stability Mechanism, should Ireland ever need it. I want this country to have the same access as all other euro countries to this insurance policy. This is very important," said Kenny, who has insisted that Ireland should be able to resume normal borrowing on bond markets next year.

Kenny added that Ireland's exceptional reliance on foreign corporate investment also made the treaty's approval essential. Ireland's tepid return to economic growth over the past year has been driven by strong exports from the approximately 950 high-tech multinationals, including 600 U.S. companies, with Irish operations.

Nation

Almost half of new vets seek disability

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP CHIEF MEDICAL WRITER

America's newest veterans are filing for disability benefits at a historic rate, claiming to be the most medically and mentally troubled generation of former troops the nation has ever seen.

A staggering 45 percent of the 1.6 million veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are now seeking compensation for injuries they say are service-related. That is more than double the estimate of 21 percent who filed such claims after the Gulf War in the early 1990s, top government officials told The Associated Press.

What's more, these new veterans are claiming eight to nine ailments on average, and the most recent ones over the last year are claiming 11 to 14. By comparison, Vietnam veterans are currently receiving compensation for fewer than four, on average, and those from World War II and Korea, just two.

It's unclear how much worse off these new veterans are than their predecessors. Many factors are driving the dramatic increase in claims—the weak economy, more troops surviving wounds, and more awareness of problems such as concussions and PTSD. Almost one-third have been granted disability so far.

Government officials and some veterans' advocates say that veterans who might have been able to work with certain disabilities may be more inclined to seek benefits now because they lost jobs or can't find any. Aggressive outreach and advocacy efforts also have brought more veterans into the system, which must evaluate each claim to see if it is war-related. Payments range from $127 a month for a 10 percent disability to $2,769 for a full one.

As the nation commemorates the more than 6,400 troops who died in post-9/11 wars, the problems of those who survived also draw attention. These new veterans are seeking a level of help the government did not anticipate, and for which there is no special fund set aside to pay.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is mired in backlogged claims, but "our mission is to take care of whatever the population is," said Allison Hickey, the VA's undersecretary for benefits. "We want them to have what their entitlement is."

The 21 percent who filed claims in previous wars is Hickey's estimate of an average for Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield. The VA has details only on the current disability claims being paid to veterans of each war.

The AP spent three months reviewing records and talking with doctors, government officials and former troops to take stock of the new veterans. They are different in many ways from those who fought before them.

AP

In this Wednesday, March 7, 2012 file photo, Army Pfc. Kevin Trimble, 19, adjusts his myoelectric upper limb prosthetic for occupational therapy at the Center for the Intrepid at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. At 19, Kevin has lost both legs above the knee and an arm from a bomb in Afghanistan.

More are from the Reserves and National Guard - 28 percent of those filing disability claims—rather than career military. Reserves and National Guard made up a greater percentage of troops in these wars than they did in previous ones. About 31 percent of Guard/Reserve new veterans have filed claims compared to 56 percent of career military ones.

More of the new veterans are women, accounting for 12 percent of those who have sought care through the VA. Women also served in greater numbers in these wars than in the past. Some female veterans are claiming PTSD due to military sexual trauma—a new challenge from a disability rating standpoint, Hickey said.

The new veterans have different types of injuries than previous veterans did. That's partly because improvised bombs have been the main weapon and because body armor and improved battlefield care allowed many of them to survive wounds that in past wars proved fatal.

"They're being kept alive at unprecedented rates," said Dr. David Cifu, the VA's medical rehabilitation chief. More than 95 percent of troops wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan have survived.

Larry Bailey II is an example. After tripping a rooftop bomb in Afghanistan last June, the 26-year-old Marine remembers flying into the air, then fellow troops attending to him.

"I pretty much knew that my legs were gone. My left hand, from what I remember I still had three fingers on it," although they didn't seem right, Bailey said. "I looked a few times but then they told me to stop looking." Bailey, who is from Zion, Ill., north of Chicago, ended up a triple amputee and expects to get a hand transplant this summer.

He is still transitioning from active duty and is not yet a veteran. Just over half of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans eligible for VA care have used it so far.

Of those who have sought VA care:

■ More than 1,600 of them lost a limb; many others lost fingers or toes.

■ At least 156 are blind, and thousands of others have impaired vision.

■ More than 177,000 have hearing loss, and more than 350,000 report tinnitus - noise or ringing in the ears.

■ Thousands are disfigured, as many as 200 of them so badly that they may need face transplants. One-quarter of battlefield injuries requiring evacuation included wounds to the face or jaw, one study found.

"The numbers are pretty staggering," said Dr. Bohdan Pomahac, a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston who has done four face transplants on non-military patients and expects to start doing them soon on veterans.

Others have invisible wounds. More than 400,000 of these new veterans have been treated by the VA for a mental health problem, most commonly, PTSD.

Tens of thousands of veterans suffered traumatic brain injury, or TBI—mostly mild concussions from bomb blasts—and doctors don't know what's in store for them long-term. Cifu, of the VA, said that roughly 20 percent of active duty troops suffered concussions, but only one-third of them have symptoms lasting beyond a few months.

That's still a big number, and "it's very rare that someone has just a single concussion," said David Hovda, director of the UCLA Brain Injury Research Center. Suffering multiple concussions, or one soon after another, raises the risk of long-term problems. A brain injury also makes the brain more susceptible to PTSD, he said.

On a more mundane level, many new veterans have back, shoulder and knee problems, aggravated by carrying heavy packs and wearing the body armor that helped keep them alive. One recent study found that 19 percent required orthopedic surgery consultations and 4 percent needed surgery after returning from combat.

All of this adds up to more disability claims, which for years have been coming in faster than the government can handle them. The average wait to get a new one processed grows longer each month and is now about eight months—time that a frustrated, injured veteran might spend with no income.

More than 560,000 veterans from all wars currently have claims that are backlogged—older than 125 days.

The VA's benefits chief, Hickey, gave these reasons:

■ Sheer volume. Disability claims from all veterans soared from 888,000 in 2008 to 1.3 million in 2011. Last year's included more than 230,000 new claims from Vietnam veterans and their survivors because of a change in what conditions can be considered related to Agent Orange exposure. Those complex, 50-year-old cases took more than a third of available staff, she said.

■ High number of ailments per claim. When a veteran claims 11 to 14 problems, each one requires "due diligence"—a medical evaluation and proof that it is service-related, Hickey said.

■ A new mandate to handle the oldest cases first. Because these tend to be the most complex, they have monopolized staff and pushed up average processing time on new claims, she said.

■ Outmoded systems. The VA is streamlining and going to electronic records, but for now, "We have 4.4 million case files sitting around 56 regional offices that we have to work with; that slows us down significantly," Hickey said.

Barry Jesinoski, executive director of Disabled American Veterans, called Hickey's efforts "commendable," but said: "The VA has a long way to go" to meet veterans' needs. Even before the surge in Agent Orange cases, VA officials "were already at a place that was unacceptable" on backlogged claims, he said.

He and VA officials agree that the economy is motivating some claims. His group helps veterans file them, and he said that sometimes when veterans come in, "We'll say, `Is your back worse?' and they'll say, `No, I just lost my job.'"

Jesinoski does believe these veterans have more mental problems, especially from multiple deployments.

"You just can't keep sending people into war five, six or seven times and expect that they're going to come home just fine," he said.

For taxpayers, the ordeal is just beginning. With any war, the cost of caring for veterans rises for several decades and peaks 30 to 40 years later, when diseases of aging are more common, said Harvard economist Linda Bilmes. She estimates the health care and disability costs of the recent wars at $600 billion to $900 billion.

"This is a huge number and there's no money set aside," she said. "Unless we take steps now into some kind of fund that will grow over time, it's very plausible many people will feel we can't afford these benefits we overpromised."

How would that play to these veterans, who all volunteered and now expect the government to keep its end of the bargain?

"The deal was, if you get wounded, we're going to supply this level of support," Bilmes said. Right now, "there's a lot of sympathy and a lot of people want to help. But memories are short and times change."

ACROSS THE NATION

OH police arrest baby sitter of child found dead

CINCINNATI (AP)—Police say a baby sitter for a one-year-old boy found dead in a Cincinnati apartment has been arrested on charges of abuse of a corpse and tampering with evidence. Sgt. Gary Conner says Cincinnati police arrested 26-year-old Marquita Burch of Covington, Ky., on Saturday after she reported toddler William Cunningham missing Friday in Covington and then recanted her story. The child's body was found in a closet of the Cincinnati apartment. Police don't know how he died. Burch is in jail in Cincinnati. Jail records list no attorney for her. Police say Burch had been babysitting the toddler at an apartment complex in the northern Kentucky city.

Tropical Storm Beryl makes landfall on Fla. coast

Tropical Storm Beryl has made landfall in northeastern Florida, bringing drenching rains and driving winds to the southeastern U.S. coast, forecasters said. The National Hurricane Center in Miami reported that the center of Beryl made landfall near Jacksonville Beach at around 12:10 a.m., with near-hurricane-strength winds of 70 mph (113 kph). The hurricane center reported late Sunday that the weather system was in the process of making landfall. "There are strong rain bands that are rotating around the center of the storm..." forecaster Al Sandrik said in an audio statement on the NHC website. The weather system is expected to continue dumping rain over parts of Florida and Georgia on Monday. It is expected to weaken as it moves inland and become a tropical depression by Monday night, and then moves out to sea.

Asia

Watching dissidents is a booming business in China

BEIJING (AP)—Every workday at 7:20 a.m., colleagues pick up Yao Lifa from his second-floor apartment and drive him to the elementary school where he taught for years.

This is no car pool. Yao is a prisoner, part of a China boom in outsourced police control.

By day, Yao is kept in a room, not allowed to work and watched by fit, young gym teachers and other school staff. At dinner time or later, he is sent back to the apartment that he shares with his wife and 3-year-old daughter. A surveillance camera monitors the building entrance, while police sit in a hut outside.

"At school, if I have to go to the bathroom, someone escorts me. Most of the time, I'm not allowed to speak with others or answer the phone," Yao said in a recent late-night Internet phone interview from his home in Qianjiang city. "When they bring me home, they sign me over to the next shift."

Like the blind activist Chen Guangcheng until his escape from house arrest last month, Yao belongs to an untold number of Chinese activists kept under tight control by authorities, even though in many cases they have broken no law.

Co-workers, neighbors, government office workers, unemployed young toughs and gang members are being used to monitor perceived troublemakers, according to rights groups and people under surveillance.

Yao has never faced criminal charges. His misdeed is decades of campaigning for democratic elections.

"They won't let me teach. They're afraid of course that I'll start talking about democracy to the students," said Yao, a 54-year-old former school administrator and science lab instructor with wavy black hair and possessed of a passionate, fiery manner.

While China has long been a police state, controls on these non-offenders mark a new expansion of police resources at a time the authoritarian leadership is consumed with keeping its hold over a fast-changing society.

"Social activists that no one has ever heard of have 10 people watching them," said Nicholas Bequelin, a researcher with Human Rights Watch. "The task is to identify and nip in the bud any destabilizing factors for the regime."

Mostly unknown outside their communities, the activists are a growing portion of what's called the "targeted population"—a group that also includes criminal suspects and anyone deemed a threat. They are singled out for overwhelming surveillance and by one rights group's count amount to an estimated one in every 1,000 Chinese—or well over a million.

Targeted are growing numbers of people, from typical political dissidents to labor organizers and, increasingly, ordinary Chinese who want Beijing to correct local wrongdoing. In method, this new policing represents a break from recent decades.

In Mao Zedong's radical communist heyday, colleagues, neighbors and family members snitched on suspected enemies of the revolution. Free-market reforms broke the totalitarian grip and gave people incentive to leave farms and state jobs for work in booming cities and industrial zones. Private lives and private wealth blossomed, creating less reason for snooping.

Money now fuels the extensive surveillance system. Budgeted spending for police, courts, prosecutors and other law enforcement has soared for much of the past decade, surpassing official outlays for the military for the second year in a row this year, to nearly 702 billion yuan, or $110 billion.

Allocated by Beijing to the provinces and on down, the money sometimes is called "stability preservation funds" for the overriding priority the government now puts on control. As long as trouble is quelled, Beijing doesn't seem to mind how this money is spent. It's proving a growth opportunity for cash-strapped local governments and small-time enforcers.

AP

In this Sept. 9, 2010 file photo, unidentified men block a journalist's vehicle from entering Dongshigu Village where blind activist Chen Guangcheng was locked down, in eastern China's Shandong province.

Along with the police, Yao counts the city education bureau as benefiting from the funds available for his surveillance. His minders are mainly drawn from the bureau, his Qianjiang Experimental Primary School and the ranks of physical education teachers throughout the city school system.

Anywhere from 14 to 50 people a day are on the local government payroll for his round-the-clock surveillance—what he calls the "Yao Lifa special squad." They get 50 yuan, $8, for a day shift and twice that for night work. Often, he said, hotel rooms, transport, meals and cigarettes are thrown in.

The sums add up in Qianjiang, a city of struggling factories and one million people set in the center of the country. Basic pay runs about 1,000 yuan, or $160, a month for an entry-level teacher and goes to three times that amount for a veteran, Yao said.

"This isn't bad for teachers," said Yao. "An English teacher probably wouldn't take it. They can earn extra money giving private tutoring. But gym teachers can't do the tutoring. Besides, their superiors have told them to do this. They can't not do it."

In the deep south farming county of Yun'an, more than a quarter of its 6,700 officials are on the "stability" payroll, the magazine Caijing reported last year. Township "stability" offices spent money on vans, motorcycles and computers, and also allocated reward money—20,000 yuan or $3,100 in 2010—for stopping any disgruntled local from going to Beijing to complain about conditions, the report said.

For blind legal activist Chen Guangcheng, the shock troops of his persecution were his neighbors. After the daring escape from his rural village outside Linyi city that eventually took him to New York, Chen detailed the two years of brutal house arrest in a video, saying over 100 police and other officials were involved. He, his wife and mother were beaten and his young daughter searched and harassed. Family planning officials bore him a particular grudge for exposing forced abortions and sterilization under the government's one-child policy. But it was local farmers who guarded his house and the entrances to the village and plundered the family farm for food. They received 100 yuan, or $16, a day, and though they had to kick back a tenth to the head of the surveillance squad, Chen said it is still a good deal.

"Those people, if they work other jobs, they only make 50 to 60 yuan a day. But doing this, they don't have to do anything, and they have three free meals a day and they are safe. Of course they love to do it," Chen said in the video. He said he was told 30 million yuan, $4.3 million, was spent on his captivity in 2008 and by last year that amount had doubled.

The Public Security Ministry, the national police agency, did not respond to requests for comment about the outsourcing policy. Authorities in Linyi and Qianjiang either did not answer queries or declined comment on Chen and Yao.

Cases like Chen and Yao "are the tip of the iceberg," said John Kamm, a veteran human rights lobbyist. Research by Kamm's Dui Hua Foundation found that since the mid-1980s Beijing has tasked police throughout China with controlling the "targeted population." An initial quota for police to target 2 in every 1,000 people proved unattainable, Kamm said. He said 1 in 1,000 is a more accurate estimate, or 1.3 million people.

Included are recently released convicts, parolees, suspects on bail and anyone police see as a threat—from activist lawyers to evangelical Christians. Overtly political cases are a small, expanding subset. But once marked, the status is hard to shake.

"Joining the 'targeted population' is the last stop on the road to oblivion for political prisoners," said Kamm.

Yao's forays into politics started 25 years ago when he sought to use a new electoral law to get himself elected to Qianjiang's legislature as an independent. After more than a decade of trying, Yao succeeded in 1998. He made a name for himself as an activist trying to change the Communist Party-dominated system. He championed the rights of farmers rebelling against high taxes and fees.

The party fought back. Yao and 31 teachers and others inspired by him to run for legislatures in 2003 all lost in an election he complained was rigged. Afterward, Yao's short-term detentions began. But he also at times slipped away to meet like-minded activists around the country.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Veteran politician is new Taiwan opposition leader

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Veteran politician Su Tseng-chang has been elected chairman of Taiwan's main opposition party. A lawyer by training and a former premier, Su takes a more pragmatic attitude toward China than many colleagues in the Democratic Progressive Party who support Taiwan's formal independence. Su was elected Sunday after the previous party chief stepped down after losing the island's presidential election in January to incumbent Ma Ying-jeou. Many Taiwanese voters back Ma's efforts to improve relations with China.

Father of slain Tiananmen protester kills himself

BEIJING (AP)—The father of a man killed in the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown has hanged himself after two decades of failed attempts to seek government redress. A support group for parents of the crackdown's victims said Monday that 73-year-old Ya Weilin's body was found in an unused underground parking garage below his residential complex. Zhang Xianling, a member of the group, says Ya killed himself out of despair and to protest the government's long-standing refusal to address the grievances of the victims' relatives. His death comes about a week ahead of the anniversary of the night of June 3-4, 1989, when the military crushed the weeks-long, student-led protests, possibly killing thousands of students, activists and ordinary citizens.

2 Tibetans set selves on fire outside Lhasa temple

BEIJING (AP)—Two men engulfed themselves in towering flames outside a temple that is a popular tourist site in Lhasa, marking the first time a recent wave of self-immolations to protest Chinese rule has reached the tightly guarded Tibetan capital, two U.S. broadcasters reported Monday.

Radio Free Asia said in a statement that the men were taken away by authorities within minutes of setting themselves on fire Sunday outside the Jokhang Temple.

There have been at least 34 immolations since March of last year to draw attention to China's restrictions on Buddhism and to call for the return from exile of the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. Most have taken place in heavily Tibetan areas of China, but only one had occurred in Tibet itself and none in the capital.

Protests have become rare in remote Tibet and Lhasa in particular because of tight police security that has blanketed the area since anti-government riots erupted in Lhasa in 2008.

Radio Free Asia cited a Tibetan living in exile as saying he had heard from others inside Tibet that huge flames had engulfed the two men and that they were believed to be seriously hurt or dead.

RFA said the men in Sunday's protest were believed to be monks but their identities and personal details were not immediately available.

U.S.-funded radio broadcaster Voice of America reported that the two men worked at a Lhasa restaurant called Nyima Ling. It identified one of the men as 19-year-old Dorjee Tseten but was unable to give the name or age of the other.

A woman with the Lhasa city police denied any immolation attempts had occurred. Like many Chinese bureaucrats, she refused to give her name.

Fu Jun, an official with the propaganda department of the Tibetan regional Communist Party office, said he was unaware of any immolations.

Radio Free Asia said Lhasa was under heavy police and paramilitary guard and that the situation was very tense.

Chinese authorities have confirmed some of the self-immolations over the past year but not all.

World

Syria denies Houla killings, UN condemns attack

BEIRUT (AP)—Syria on Sunday strongly denied allegations that its forces killed scores of people—including women and children—in one of the deadliest days of the country's uprising, but the U.N. Security Council after an emergency session condemned government forces for shelling residential areas.

The killing of more than 100 people in the west-central area of Houla on Friday brought widespread international criticism of the regime of President Bashar Assad, although differences emerged from world powers over whether his forces were exclusively to blame.

The Security Council issued a press statement Sunday that "condemned in the strongest possible terms" the killings in Houla. It blamed Syrian forces for artillery and tank shelling of residential areas. It also condemned the killings of civilians "by shooting at close range and by severe physical abuse," but avoided saying who was responsible for these attacks.

The council's statement said the "outrageous use of force" against civilians violated international law and Syrian government commitments under previous U.N. resolutions to stop all violence, including the use of heavy weapons in populated areas. It said "those responsible for acts of violence must be held accountable," and asked the U.N. observer mission in Syria and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to investigate the attacks and report back to the council.

Britain and France had proposed issuing a press statement condemning the attack on civilians and pointing the finger at the Syrian government for Friday's massacre. But Russia called for an emergency council meeting saying it first wanted a briefing by Gen. Robert Mood, the head of the unarmed U.N. observer mission.

AP

This citizen journalism image provided by Shaam News Network taken Saturday, May 26, 2012 purports to show shrouded dead bodies following a Syrian government assault on Houla, Syria.

The massacre in Houla on Friday cast fresh doubts on the ability of an international peace plan put forward by U.N.-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan to end Syria's 14-month-old crisis.

The brutality of the killings became clear in amateur videos posted online that showed scores of bodies, many of them young children, in neat rows and covered with blood and deep wounds. A later video showed the bodies, wrapped in white sheets, being placed in a sprawling mass grave.

Mood told the Security Council that U.N. observers at the scene now estimate 108 people were killed in Houla, U.N. peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous told reporters outside the council chamber. The U.N. counted 49 children and 34 women among the dead.

Activists from the Houla area said the army pounded the villages with artillery and clashed with local rebels after protests Friday. Some activists said pro-regime thugs later stormed the area, doing the bulk of the killing by gunning down men in the streets and stabbing women and children in their homes.

The Syrian government rejected that narrative Sunday, painting a vastly different picture.

Speaking to reporters in Damascus, Foreign Ministry spokesman Jihad Makdissi said Syrian security forces were in their local bases Friday when they were attacked by "hundreds of heavily armed gunmen" firing mortars, heavy machine guns and anti-tank missiles, staring a nine-hour battle that killed three soldiers and wounded 16.

The soldiers fought back, but didn't leave their bases, he said.

"No Syrian tank or artillery entered this place where the massacres were committed," he said. "The security forces did not leave their places because they were in a state of self-defense."

He blamed the gunmen for what he called a "terrorist massacre" in Houla and accused the media, Western officials and others of spinning a "tsunami of lies" to justify foreign intervention in Syria.

Makdissi did not provide videos or other evidence to support his version of events, nor did he give a death toll. He said the government had formed a committee to investigate and share its findings with Annan, who is due to visit Damascus in the coming days.

Throughout the uprising, the government has deployed snipers, troops and thugs to quash protests and shelled opposition areas.

A video released by the U.N. team in Syria on Sunday showed observers in Houla the day after the attack, meeting with local rebels and watching residents collect more bodies for burial. It also showed two destroyed armored personnel carriers—suggesting that local rebels put up more of a fight than the activists acknowledged.

In a letter to the Security Council, Ban said villages in the Houla area have been outside government control but surrounded by a heavy Syrian military presence.

When U.N. observers visited the area on Saturday, Ban said they saw 85 corpses in a mosque in Taldou and "observed shotgun wounds and wounds consistent with artillery fire." He said "the patrol also saw artillery and tank shells, as well as fresh tank tracks" and observed that "many buildings had been destroyed by heavy weapons."

At U.N. headquarters, Russia's deputy U.N. ambassador Alexander Pankin told reporters as he headed into the closed-door Security Council meeting that "there is substantial ground to believe that the majority of those who were killed were either slashed, cut by knives, or executed at point-blank distance."

"We have to establish whether it was Syrian authorities ... before we agree on something," he said.

US slammed from both sides of Bahrain's divide

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP)—During one of the nightly clashes with Bahrain's security forces, a new chant broke out among opposition protesters: "The U.S. is the great Satan." A few days later, pro-government marchers also waved their fists against Washington.

In a place with almost no common ground left after more than 15 months of Arab Spring-inspired unrest, both sides in the Bahrain meltdown are finding a shared target in the United States.

Their gripes are vastly different—protesters claiming the U.S. has ignored them, government backers expecting full loyalty from their longtime allies—but the across-the-board potshots at Washington's policies point to the deep complexities of U.S. attempts to navigate the crisis in the tiny Gulf kingdom.

Bahrain tugs at just about every critical Gulf issue for Washington. Atop the list: America's relations with Saudi Arabia as the main patron for the embattled Bahraini monarchy, and the stability of the Bahrain-based headquarters of the Navy's 5th Fleet, which is one of the Pentagon's main counterweights to Iranian military influence in the Gulf.

At the same time, the nonstop clashes in Bahrain—and at least 50 deaths since February 2011—have brought critical remarks from Washington about alleged human rights abuses and claims of heavy-handed police tactics.

"But there's really only so much Washington can say," said Toby Jones, an expert on Bahraini affairs at Rutgers University. "There's just too much at stake for U.S. interests."

This is the slow-drip anger building up among the protesters led by Bahrain's Shiite majority.

Their demands began last year with calls for a greater say in the country's affairs, which are tightly run by the ruling Sunni dynasty. The protest cries gradually sharpened to urge for the downfall of the Western-backed king and his inner circle.

In a similar way, the demonstrations once reached out to America for the same moral support given to uprisings in Egypt and elsewhere. In recent weeks, however, the tone toward the U.S. has darkened as protesters feel abandoned by President Barack Obama.

Banners at anti-government rally earlier this month denounced America's "double standard."

"Obama supports the killers, not democracy and freedom," said one message. Another carried a picture of U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton with the lines: "U.S. interests comes before our freedom." Some protesters burned handmade Stars and Stripes.

"Obama is the one who had people chanting about change and to fight for what's right," said Naba Ali, a 35-year-old woman who works as a sales clerk. "We Bahrainis were inspired by him. And now he has turned his back on us."

The State Department has issued many statements critical of Bahrain's crackdowns, such as arrest sweeps and job purges, and use of temporary martial law-style rule last year to convict activists in a special security court. Clinton warned Bahrain it was on the "wrong track" by bringing in Saudi-led forces last year as reinforcements.

Bahrain, in turn, has taken some steps toward reform, including ordering retrials in civilian courts and giving the elected parliament more sway to question and oversee the king's hand-picked government.

WORLD BRIEFS

Egypt candidates file appeals, charge vote fraud

CAIRO (AP)—Three top candidates in Egypt's presidential race filed appeals to the election commission ahead of the deadline Sunday, alleging violations in the first round vote that they say could change the outcome. The appeals, alleging fraud, are likely to enflame an already explosive race, with two of the most polarizing candidates finishing first. Preliminary results from last week's election placed Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammed Morsi and Hosni Mubarak's last prime minister, Ahmed Shafiq, as the two candidates entering a June 16-17 runoff. Thirteen candidates were on the ballot. Young, liberal secularists who led the popular rebellion that overthrew longtime leader Hosni Mubarak last year failed to place a candidate in the runoff.

Guinea-Bissau rambles on, despite coup

BISSAU, Guinea-Bissau (AP)—Campaign banners from an election that was violently interrupted still hang in the main thoroughfare of this steamy capital, a reminder that a stable government is far from the country's grasp. Guinea-Bissau was just weeks away from holding a presidential runoff election when soldiers attacked the front-runner's home in April and arrested him along with the country's interim president. To the 1.5 million residents of this tiny, coastal nation, it spelled yet another upheaval in a history full of them. No leader in nearly 40 years of independence has finished his time in office in Guinea-Bissau, a former Portuguese colony on Africa's western coast that has long been plagued by coups.

Overdrive

Dodge Durango a crossover with an SUV's space

By EMMA JAYNE WILLIAMS
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

The 2012 Dodge Durango is a midsize crossover with interior volume equal to some larger SUVs.

But this is not the same as the truck-based Durango it replaced last year, although it is still muscular-looking and powerful. It shares its basic architecture with the new Jeep Grand Cherokee, but has room for seven instead of the Jeep's five passengers.

The Durango was completely new for 2011, moving to a unibody structure from its previous body-on-frame design. The 2012 model has only a few trim and powertrain updates.

Seven trim levels are available, starting with the rear-wheel-drive SXT for $28,995 and ending with the Citadel all-wheel-drive for $42,995, before options. Models are designed for specific lifestyle needs and also include Express, Crew and R/T version.

My Durango was the R/T rear-drive model, which lists for $35,795 before options. The R/T, or road-and-track, model comes with the optional 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 engine, rather than the base 3.5-liter V-6.

The body-color grille made it instantly recognizable as a Dodge, and the subtle sculpting on the body side, hood, fenders, wheel wells and rear window pillars suggested strength without being muscle-bound.

My tester was actually quite comfortable, even in the third row, with lots of flexible space for hauling stuff. Even the front passenger seat folded flat to make room for extra-long objects.

In the third row, the 50/50 split-folding bench seat folded flat, using a handle located on the seat back, to increase the cargo area from 17.2 cubic feet to 47.7 cubic feet. With the 60/40-split second row folded, the cargo area increased to a whopping 85 cubic feet. Maximum payload was listed as 1,340 pounds.

The front passenger and driver had 40.3 inches of legroom and 39.9 inches of headroom, while the second row had 38.6 inches of legroom and 39.8 inches of headroom. No data was available for the third row.

NUTS & BOLTS
Base price: **$28,995**
Price as tested: **$38,610**
All prices exclude destination charges.

Both bench seats were a little firm, especially the middle position in the second row crowded by the floor hump, but not to the point of being uncomfortable.

The third row was accessed by folding and tumbling the passenger-side seat on the second row, using a lever and a strap. I managed to climb in, but I wouldn't want to do it on a regular basis—it's best left to younger, more nimble individuals.

Passengers in the third row have their own air vents on the ceiling, along with reading lamps, cupholders and two of the nine speakers located at head level on the rearmost side pillars.

Second-row passengers had full climate controls with vents on the console and the ceiling. They also had reading lamps, cupholders on the center armrest, speakers, bottle holders and map pockets on the doors, and heated seats.

The assist handles were conveniently located on the pillars between the front and rear doors, which helped when I climbed into the third row. Second-row passengers also had access to a 115-volt AC outlet, bag hooks on the seatback pockets, and usable garment hooks above the doors.

My tester had black leather front bucket seats, part of an option package, with contrasting red stitching and embroidered R/T badges.

My driving position was pleasant thanks to the eight-way driver's seat with memory for radio, seat and mirrors. The "easy-exit" feature moves the driver's seat down and back when engine is stopped and door is opened.

There also was a power-tilting and telescopic leather-wrapped steering wheel with chrome Dodge crosshair badge. The passenger seat adjusted six ways, and both seats had four-way power lumbar support and heat. Large, multifunction manually folding mirrors were also included in the package.

Durango comes with a remote-start system, pushbutton keyless start, cruise control, hill-start assist, sport suspension, performance steering, security alarm and trailer sway damping.

My R/T's Hemi engine cranked out 360 horsepower, and was connected to a six-speed automatic transmission. This combination gives the Durango a towing capacity of 7,400 pounds.

The V-8 engine has fuel-saving technology that cuts out four of the cylinders during level highway cruising. EPA ratings are 14 mpg in the city and 20 on the highway for the model I tested.

Electronic stability control and electronic roll mitigation help keep body sway to a minimum on hard turns and during extreme driving conditions on or off road.

My around-town driving has a few sharp turns (no hills or extreme conditions) and the Durango performed more like a car than a truck, mostly because of the carlike unibody construction.

MCT

Unlike the truck-based Durango it replaced last year, the 2012 Dodge Durango shares its basic architecture with the new Jeep Grand Cherokee, but has room for seven instead of the Jeep's five passengers.

Struts should outlast their plates

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: I purchased a 2008 Buick Lucerne new, and it now has 68,000 miles. For the past 10,000 miles or so, a rattle or clunk noise has been coming from the front when it's driven over any kind of bump. It sounds like something is loose in the front end.

I find the noises and squeaks really annoying. Upon inspection, the dealer found that the strut plates are worn, causing the problem. The struts are fine, but they want to replace the plates and struts for about $1,200. An independent shop said they could replace the plates only for $500. How can I be assured that this is the problem before making the investment of changing the plates? Is there any reason to replace the struts at the same time if they are just fine now?

ANSWER: The McPherson strut mounting plates at the top of the strut are fitted with bearings to allow the strut to rotate as you steer the vehicle. Wear in the strut bearings could certainly cause the type of noise you describe. But so could worn stabilizer bar or link bushings, loose brake pads or worn lower ball joints. Get a second opinion by having a tire or independent shop inspect the front suspension components.

If the strut plates are worn, they can be replaced individually. Back in the day, at 70,000 miles I would have suggested the struts be replaced at the same time. But today's shocks and struts are far better quality and last much longer, so unless there's evidence of a leak or a problem with the ride, I wouldn't replace the struts themselves.

■■■

Q: I have a 2009 Prius with about 22,000 miles. In local driving, when I slow to 15 to 20 miles per hour and then apply the brakes lightly with the wheel turned an eighth-turn to the right, I hear a ticking or ratcheting noise coming from the front. I have twice taken it to the dealer, but the noise is absent after I get there. The service tech suspected a CV joint problem but found no evidence of malfunction. I think the noise originates higher than that, possibly toward the bulkhead behind the engine, but he said he had no other ideas without hearing the noise.

A: I would not suspect a CV joint to make noise under light braking. I would first focus on the front brakes. If one of the brake pads is loose, it may click as it moves back and forth within the caliper. Check for play in the front hub/wheel bearing assemblies, and don't overlook possibilities such as an inboard wheel weight hitting the caliper, or, if the vehicle is equipped with wheel covers, a loose spring clip rattling against the wheel.

Paul Brand, author of How to Repair Your Car, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver.

UNDER THE HOOD

Emissions issue after car sale smells fishy

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I recently purchased a 1998 Chevrolet Corvette. Three miles from the dealership, the "check engine" light came on. After pulling codes it was determined it was the electronic brake and traction control module, a part of the anti-lock braking system and traction control system. It also pulled codes for the steering sensor. The dealer says the vehicle was sold "as is" with a 30-day drivetrain warranty. The part is no longer supplied by GM, and after seven hours on the Internet and the phone, I learned there is not a part anywhere available in the United States.

I say this was a fraudulent sale, considering that the vehicle was sold with a new sticker on the windshield and it was obvious the dealer knew about the trouble. Is this a safety issue? What would you suggest?—David Yetman, Temple, N.H.

ANSWER: This is a lousy deal that the dealer needs to take care of. From what I could find regarding the New Hampshire safety testing program, light-duty vehicles such as the Corvette require an on-board diagnostics check and safety inspection in order to be registered at time of sale and annually. An illuminated "check engine" light is grounds for an emissions test failure.

It's tricky to say if inhibited ABS and traction-control systems are considered a safety defect. The vehicle will be as safe to drive as an older non-ABS or traction-controlled vehicle, but the added safety afforded by these systems would be unavailable with the internal control unit and steering sensor failures listed.

One may wonder why the "check engine" light might illuminate as a result of seemingly non-engine systems in distress. Typically, only an emissions-related fault should cause this. What's happening is the ECM-PCM, or engine/powertrain computer, shares information with the electronic brake and traction control module, using steering sensor information to infer power steering pump load, which is needed for idle speed management. This qualifies the fault as an emissions issue, making that little orange light your best friend. A surprising amount of additional information and commands runs back and forth as needed between the two boxes to enable the traction control function.

It seems odd to me—and perhaps it might also to a safety enforcement officer or small-claims court judge—that the dealer could be unaware of the problem at the time of sale. Diagnostic trouble codes can be cleared, and the "check engine" light may remain off for a short period of time. Since it took just three miles of driving to trigger three codes, the codes must have just been cleared. It's also odd that to pass the plug-in emissions check, which doesn't sample exhaust gasses, all of the on-board diagnostic system's readiness monitors would need to have been completed, which takes quite a bit of driving.

One could make the argument that the car was fine at the time of inspection and these three issues just jumped out during the three miles you drove the car. I'm a car guy, not a lawyer. Talk this over with your Department of Motor Vehicles and see if their investigative unit wants to play ball. If they're like the DMV in my state, their sharp teeth get respect and results. Resolving the repair issue could be quite costly, as the replacement parts needed are pricey and scarce.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

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Men In Black 3

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:45
Saturday and Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:45
Monday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones
Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones, and director Barry Sonnenfeld return to the kooky world of the top-secret government agents who protect our planet from hostile aliens in this third entry of the Men in Black film series. This will be the first film in the franchise to be presented in 3D. Flight of the Conchords' Jemaine Clement co-stars as the main baddie, Yaz, with Josh Brolin lending his talents as the younger version of Jones' character.

Chernobyl Diaries

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:30
Saturday and Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:30
Monday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Jesse McCartney, Carey Van Dyke
Horror • Rated R

Synopsis

Six tourists hire an extreme tour guide who takes them to the abandoned city Pripyat, the former home to the workers of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor. During their exploration, they soon discover they are not alone.

Battleship

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday and Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Monday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Liam Neeson, Taylor Kitsch
Science fiction, War • Rated PG 13

What To Expect When You're Expecting

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:35
Saturday and Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:35
Monday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Cameron Diaz, Jennifer Lopez
Comedy • Rated PG 13

The Dictator

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday and Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Monday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Sacha Baron Cohen, Ana Faris
Comedy • Rated R

Dark Shadows

Friday		4:15	7:15	9:50
Saturday and Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:50
Monday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:15	7:15	

Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter
Horror • Rated PG 13

Marvel's The Avengers

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:55
Saturday & Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:55
Monday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Tuesday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Robert Downey, Jr., Chris Evans, Samuel L. Jackson
Action • Rated PG 13

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Life & Style

Haneke's 'Amour' wins top prize at Cannes

CANNES, France (AP)—The Cannes Film Festival rewarded one of its favorite directors Sunday, as Michael Haneke won the top prize for a second time with his stark film about love and death, "Amour."

The Austrian director's powerful and understated film stars two French acting icons—85-year-old Emmanuelle Riva and 81-year-old Jean-Louis Trintignant—as an elderly couple coping with the wife's worsening health.

Cannes jury member Jean Paul Gaultier praised the performances of the two actors and the "incredible connection" they established in the movie.

Haneke said he made the film because "I experienced something in my family that touched me." He thanked his wife and—in a rare personal comment—said he had promised her "we would never leave each other, like in the film."

Some viewers were surprised by the movie's frank humanity, coming from a master of tightly controlled cinema whose movies often contain sudden bursts of violence.

The director said his reputation for delivering shocks was unjust.

"Journalists always try to stick a label on directors," he said. "For a long time I've been the expert in violence." But he said a film's style should match its subject matter, not its director, and "this film is about love."

Haneke has brought 10 films to Cannes over the years, including "Funny Games" and "Hidden." He previously won the Palme in 2009 for "The White Ribbon," and is only the seventh director to take the top prize twice.

The festival jury awarded the second-place Grand Prize to Matteo Garrone's Italian satire "Reality," while Ken Loach's whiskey-tasting comedy "The Angels' Share" won the third-place Jury Prize.

Both have won Cannes prizes before—Garrone took the Grand Prize for "Gomorrah" in 2008 and Loach won the Palme d'Or in 2006 for "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Mexico's Carlos Reygadas was named best director for his surrealism-tinged family story "Post Tenebras Lux."

The best actor prize went to Mads Mikkelsen as a man ostracized by his small-town community when he is accused of child abuse in "The Hunt."

Jury member Ewan McGregor said Mikkelsen had given a beautiful performance whose "wonder is in the subtlety ... but with complete conviction with his character."

Best actress was won jointly by Cristina Flutur and Cosmina Stratan, as friends separated by faith in Romanian movie "Beyond the Hills." Cristian Mungiu's drama of love and faith in a remote Romanian monastery also won the award for best screenplay.

The prize winners were chosen from among 22 contenders by a jury, led by Italian director Nanni Moretti, that included actors Ewan McGregor and Diane Kruger, director Alexander Payne and fashion designer Jean-Paul Gaultier.

Moretti revealed that none of the winners had been a unanimous choice, with several films sharply dividing the jury.

He said the biggest fights had been over Leos Carax's bizarre and episodic "Holy Motors," Ulrich Seidl's sex tourism drama "Paradise: Love" and Reygadas' "Post Tenebras Lux," whose title means "light after the darkness."

British director Andrea Arnold, a juror, said it was a film "which dared to fail and be brave about life."

The 12-day festival has seen plenty of glamour, with the likes of Brad Pitt, Nicole Kidman, Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart appearing both on-screen and on the red carpet.

But in the movies, weighty themes dominated at an event whose French Riviera froth was subdued by several days of unseasonable rain and cold.

Despite a strong American flavor to the festival, U.S. films were shut out apart from Benh Zeitli's "Beasts of the Southern Wild," which won the Camera d'Or for best first film.

The jury overlooked Pitt, who plays a cynical mob enforcer in Andrew Dominik's "Killing Them Softly," and Kidman as a Southern femme fatale in Lee Daniels' "The Paperboy."

Payne said it would be wrong to draw any conclusions about the state of a nation's cinema "based on one tiny snapshot."

Other much-praised performances at the festival included Marion Cotillard's tragedy-struck killer-whale trainer in "Rust and Bone," newcomer Paul Brannigan's scrappy Glasgow lad in "The Angels' Share," and Denis Lavant, as a performer who takes on a host of bizarre personas in "Holy Motors."

Pattinson leaves vampires behind in 'Cosmopolis'

CANNES, France (AP)—Robert Pattinson has gone from playing a vampire to depicting another kind of bloodsucker—a billionaire financier whose world crumbles in the course of a nightmarish cross-town drive in "Cosmopolis."

The "Twilight" heartthrob stars in David Cronenberg's Cannes Film Festival entry as sleek, self-centered moneyman Eric Packer, who sees his fortune and sense of self evaporate during an eventful day in his stretch limo.

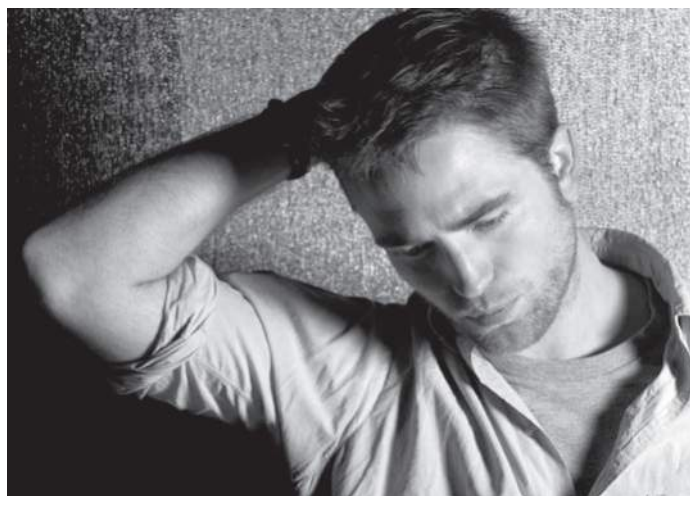
Pattinson's famously handsome face is on-screen in every scene, but "Twilight"'s young fans may be surprised and confused by a film that explores Cronenberg's fascination with physical, social and psychic violence.

The 26-year-old actor is not worried.

"If some 12-year-olds went to go and see that, or got the video for their birthday—sitting down and watching that, it's incredible," the actor said during an interview on a Cannes hotel rooftop. "I would love that to happen if I was a kid."

It's a bit of amiable mischief-making from an actor who wants to be known as more than doe-eyed vampire Edward Cullen, in love with human Bella Swan in the "Twilight" saga.

He said he craves the cinematic understatement that blockbusters don't always provide.



AP

Actor Robert Pattinson poses for portraits during the 65th international film festival, in Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 26, 2012.

"I remember when I was in the first 'Twilight' movie, I really wanted to not have Edward touch Bella, apart from when he saves her life and when they kiss the first time," said Pattinson, lightly rumpled but friendly and poised after a long day of press interviews. "I was thinking of the (Ang Lee) movie 'Lust, Caution,' and thinking there should be this tension there the whole time—just standing near someone there's electricity.

"But sometimes it just makes things too hard. You kind of forget that most people want to go to the cinema just to watch a movie rather than watch something really weird."

"Weird" is par for the course with Cronenberg, and Pattinson gets plenty of scope to stretch himself in "Cosmopolis," playing a hollow-eyed Master of the Universe forced to confront his mortality.

Events, emotion and violence keep intruding on the hermetically sealed universe of his limo as he tries, futilely, to cross a crisis-wracked Manhattan in search of a haircut.

Packer crosses paths with characters including his aloof wife (Sarah Gadon), his arty lover (Juliette Binoche), a pie-throwing protester (Mathieu Amalric) and a murderously angry former employee (Paul Giamatti).

Packer is not, to put it mildly, a likable character. Some have seen him as an avatar of Wall Street excess, but Pattinson says he watched interviews with serial killers Jeffrey Dahmer and Ted Bundy, rather than real-life financiers, to help him create the character's voice.

"He's like an alien," Pattinson said of the character.

"He's not part of his body. Everything is an abstraction. The world's an abstraction. Everything is."

The film has been widely described as a dystopian reflection of the present crisis of capitalism—but Pattinson sees it in a more cheerful light, as Packer learns to face his humanity.

"I always thought it's kind of a happy story, up until the right at the very end," he said.

"He's suddenly starting to feel and he becomes more physical as the day goes on, more alive. He feels like he's part of the world."

Packer is cut off from other humans by wealth and temperament, cocooned in his car and protected by vigilant bodyguards. Pattinson has, to an extent, been cut off by fame. He and his girlfriend and "Twilight" co-star Kristen Stewart are magnets for paparazzi and fans.

Pattinson said the experience had given him insight into some aspects of Packer's situation.

Justin Bieber wanted for questioning in scuffle

CALABASAS, Calif. (AP)—Justin Bieber is wanted for questioning by Los Angeles County Sheriff's investigators after a photographer complained of being roughed up by the pop star at a shopping center.

Sheriff's Lt. Robert Wiard (ward) says the photographer called 911 on Sunday and complained of pain to his chest. Wiard said the scuffle happened when the photographer tried to snap pictures of Bieber and his girlfriend, teen actress Selena Gomez, after they walked out of a theater at The Commons at Calabasas.

Wiard says the photographer was taken to a hospital where he was treated and released.

He says Bieber and Gomez left before deputies arrived, so investigators want to talk to him to get his side of the story.

A call to Bieber's publicist was not immediately returned late Sunday.

'Men in Black 3' takes down 'Avengers' with $55M

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The suits have knocked off the superheroes at the box office.

Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones' sequel "Men in Black 3" debuted as the No. 1 movie over Memorial Day weekend with $55 million domestically from Friday to Sunday.

That bumps Disney's "The Avengers" into second-place after three blockbuster weekends on top for the superhero sensation. "The Avengers" took in $37 million over the three days to push its domestic total to $514 million and become only the fourth movie ever to top half a billion dollars.

Distributor Sony estimates that by the end of the four-day holiday weekend Monday, "Men in Black 3" will have pulled in $70 million domestically and $202 million worldwide.

Universal's "Battleship" was No. 3 in its second weekend with $10.8 million, raising its domestic earnings to $44.3 million. Paramount's comedy "The Dictator" took in $9.6 million to finish fourth in its second weekend and lift its total to $41.5 million.

The Warner Bros. horror tale "Chernobyl Diaries" opened at No. 5 with $8 million.

"Men in Black 3" launched with a bit more cash than its two predecessors, which both had opening weekends of just above $50 million.

But the original "Men in Black" debuted in 1997 and "Men in Black II" premiered in 2002, when admission prices were much lower than today's. That means "Men in Black 3" sold fewer tickets than the previous installments.

Distributor Disney estimates that "The Avengers" will take in $47.1 million for the four-day holiday weekend, lifting the film's domestic total to $523.8 million. That will put "The Avengers" within $10 million of "The Dark Knight," the No. 3 movie on the all-time revenue chart with $533.3 million domestically.

"The Avengers" will pass "The Dark Knight" in the coming week, leaving only two movies above it: "Avatar" at $760.5 million and "Titanic" at $658.5 million.

With $26.3 million overseas, "The Avengers" raised its international total to $781.6 million, and its worldwide revenues to just under $1.3 billion. "The Avengers" will soon overtake "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" at $1.33 billion to become the No. 3 film on the global revenue list, again behind "Avatar" at $2.8 billion and "Titanic" at $2.2 billion.

De Niro talks to Bates grads, gets honorary degree

LEWISTON, Maine (AP)—As he received an honorary doctorate Sunday, Oscar-winning actor Robert De Niro told Bates College graduates that despite his own lack of formal education, he made out OK.

During a 15-minute address that was by turns sincere and irreverent, De Niro drew a steady stream of laughter from the 463 graduating seniors and more than 5,000 onlookers at the private, liberal arts college's campus.

De Niro, who quit high school to pursue an acting career, was one of three high-profile guests who received honorary degrees at the Bates commencement. PBS "Newshour" senior correspondent Gwen Ifill and Princeton University molecular biologist Bonnie Bassler also were honored.

But it was De Niro who stole the show.

"In many ways, leaving school when I did it was an advantage. I saved nearly $6,000 by not having to pay tuition and expenses for four years of education," he said. "I feel a little foolish, because if I had waited until now not to go to college, I could have saved around a quarter of a million."

Looking back, he said, "it worked out just fine. I saved the money, and I got the degree."

The honorary doctorate of fine arts was conferred by Nancy Cable, interim president at Bates. Trustee Michael Chu, De Niro's friend, presented the degree.

De Niro also offered the graduates some serious advice.

"If you're an actor, always be true to your character," he said. "If you're not an actor, have character and always be true to yourself."

De Niro won a best actor Academy Award for "Raging Bull" and best supporting actor Oscar for "The Godfather, Part II." He earned four more Oscar nominations.

Nicole Kidman praises her red carpet marriage

AP

Actress Nicole Kidman arrives for the screening of Hemingway and Gellhorn at the 65th international film festival, in Cannes, southern France, Friday, May 25, 2012.

CANNES, France (AP)—Nicole Kidman's red carpet date traveled for 35 hours to join her in Cannes.

The actress's husband—musician Keith Urban—made the trip from Sydney, where's he's been filming "The Voice," to escort her up the famous Palais stairs at the Cannes Film Festival for the screening of her film, "The Paperboy."

And Kidman says his effort meant "everything" to her: "As long as he's there, he's my rock, everything's fine. I feel a little out to sea if he's not there."

Not that she didn't know what she was doing. It's the star's fifth time in Cannes, so she's used to the huge photo calls, press conferences and international interviews in the palm-tree scattered French coastal resort.

This time Kidman has two movies showing—"The Paperboy," which is competing for the Palme d'Or top prize, and, outside of competition, the HBO movie "Hemingway & Gellhorn."

"The Paperboy," director Lee Daniels' steamy Southern noir in which she stars with Zac Efron and Matthew McConaughey, received mixed reactions at press screenings before the premiere—so the cast were delighted when the audience took to their feet to clap for 15 minutes after seeing it.

While a teary Efron described the ovation as one of the most profound moments of his life and the rest of the cast was overwhelmed, Kidman remained dry-eyed—if appreciative.

"We got an amazing standing ovation, which was great. This is my fifth time so I've had many, many, many different reactions," she said in an interview with The Associated Press. "That's the longest standing 'O' I've ever gotten at Cannes."

"Lee was crying, but I wasn't crying. I cry at my kids, I cry with my family, I don't really cry outside of that—that's the stuff that brings me to tears!" Kidman said. "All of this other stuff, the glitter, and those sort of things, I'm more sort of immune to at this stage. It's probably because I've been doing it for so long."

She credits putting showbiz further down her list of priorities with keeping her relationship on an even keel, even if it does involve a lot of international travel.

"Keith and I have been at this for a long time. We know where it all stands, so there's kind of a practicality in a sense," she explained.

While that doesn't sound very romantic, Kidman says they manage to keep it going, even on the road.

"We can have a really cool life together because that's what matters. In terms of romance, for us, that's so much more important than any of this," she says, gesturing to the lights and the cameras pointing at her.

The 65th Cannes Film Festival runs to Sunday, when the jury sits down to choose its prizewinners.

Bullied boy's injuries should trigger police involvement

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I am a retired New York City police officer and a resource officer at two high schools in Brooklyn. I must comment on the letter you printed from "Worried About My Boy in Tulsa" (March 29), whose 7-year-old is bullied. If a child hits another child so hard that medical attention is required, it is an assault. The police should have been notified and appropriate law enforcement action taken.

The school then has cause to remove the violent child and have him/her placed in an education program better suited for violent children. The statute of limitations is not out, so the police can still be contacted as soon as possible by this parent.

JIM C.

DEAR JIM: Many readers pointed out that this incident went beyond bullying into assault, and offered advice to "Worried" on this troubling but prevalent issue. Their comments:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: If "Worried's" son is injured at school again, she needs to take him to an emergency room and have the injuries documented. While there, she should call 911 and report the assault to the police. She should start the report with this sentence: "I'd like to report an assault on my child." If she says he is being "bullied," they may not take her as seriously.

CONCERNED GRAN IN OKLAHOMA

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am an attorney practicing law in California and have been involved in several bullying cases. The first step should be to ensure the child's safety. If the perpetrators are not being removed from the environment, the child needs to be. The cost of private schooling or the inconvenience of a school transfer would be part of a lawsuit for damages.

Second, the police should be notified. Third, they should get a lawyer who knows how to put the school on notice.

A lawsuit in this case is warranted if the school has known about the bullying but has done nothing about it.

MIKE IN NEWPORT BEACH

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son was bullied in elementary school. I spoke at length to his teachers and found out that he was exhibiting behaviors that triggered the bullying. He simply did not know how to interact with his peers. It wasn't my son's "fault"; he needed help with social skills.

It took several tries to find a counselor who connected—a wonderful man who taught him how to be a friend. The bullying stopped. Now my son is graduating from high school with many good friends.

Kids can be cruel. They "smell" weakness and pick on those who are different. Sometimes the best we can do is help our children learn how to draw others to them, rather than be singled out as a victim or undesirable member of the team.

BEEN THERE IN CHARLESTON, W.Va.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Please tell "Worried in Tulsa" to call all of her local TV stations and ask for an interview. That will probably get some action.

LOU ANN W.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son was bullied during his entire year of kindergarten. That summer we enrolled him in a tae kwon do program. After a few months he was a different person! The confidence and direction he learned were vital. He gained the inner strength to be sure of himself in the face of bullies.

Tae kwon do teaches perseverance, self-control, modesty and indomitable spirit—qualities from which we can all benefit. I urge "Worried" to look around in her community for a tae kwon do program with an instructor who specializes in teaching this art to children.

MONTANA MOM

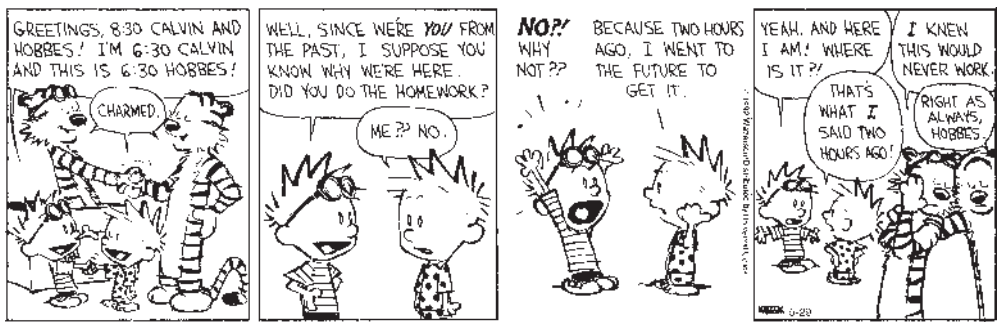
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


GREETINGS, 8:30 CALVIN AND HOBBES! I'M 6:30 CALVIN AND THIS IS 6:30 HOBBES!
CHARMED.
WELL, SINCE WE'RE YOU FROM THE PAST, I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE. DID YOU DO THE HOMEWORK?
ME?? NO.
NO?! WHY NOT??
BECAUSE TWO HOURS AGO, I WENT TO THE FUTURE TO GET IT.
YEAH. AND HERE I AM! WHERE IS IT?!
I KNEW THIS WOULD NEVER WORK.
THAT'S WHAT I SAID TWO HOURS AGO!
RIGHT AS ALWAYS, HOBBES.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

THEY CUT MY TREE DOWN!
NOW WHERE AM I GOING TO LIVE?!
WHAT'S THAT NOISE IN THE ATTIC?
SQUIRRELS HAVE AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF FURNITURE
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield
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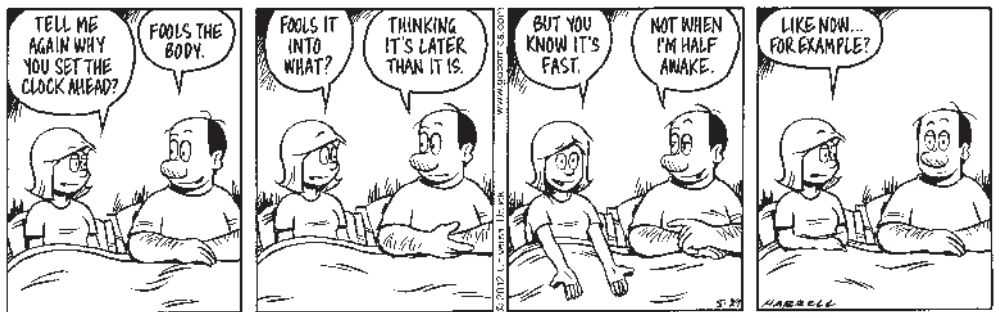
JIM DAVIS 5-29

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


TELL ME AGAIN WHY YOU SET THE CLOCK AHEAD?
FOOLS THE BODY.
FOOLS IT INTO WHAT?
THINKING IT'S LATER THAN IT IS.
BUT YOU KNOW IT'S FAST.
NOT WHEN I'M HALF AWAKE.
LIKE NOW... FOR EXAMPLE?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

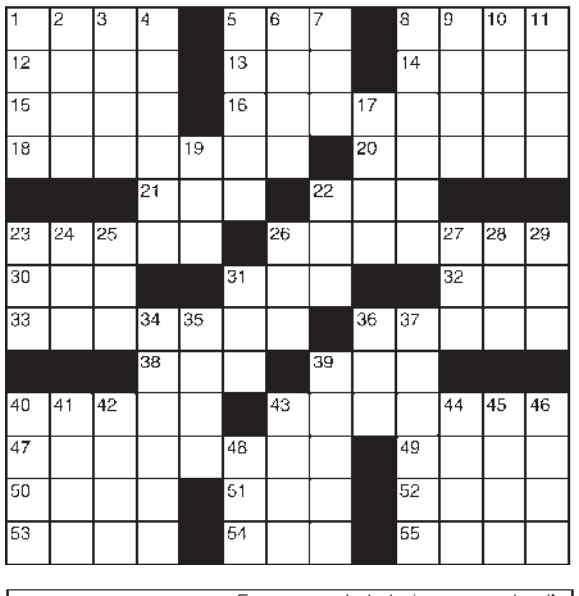
ACROSS
1 Edible seaweed
5 More (Sp.)
8 Opposed to
12 Finished
13 Inventor Whitney
14 Ring out
15 Actress Campbell
16 Turtle shell, e.g.
18 Look of pain
20 Photocopier name
21 Greek vowel
22 Meadow
23 "Blue — Shoes"
26 Late "60 Minutes" correspondent
30 "Born in the —"
31 "The Simpsons" network
32 Payable
33 Designer Gianni
36 Eye color
38 Pipe material, for short
39 Solidify
40 Weird
43 Countertop, e.g.
47 Hot rodders' competition
49 Back
50 Division word
51 — de deux
52 Therefore
53 Examination
54 Explosive letters
55 "Handsome is as handsome —"

DOWN
1 "King —"
2 Always
3 Jeans-maker Strauss
4 Undergrad course of study
5 Muhammad's birthplace
6 Wings
7 Knight's address
8 Go to a higher court
9 Approach
10 Mexican entree
11 Holly
17 Figure-skating leap
19 Consumed
22 Remiss
23 Minivan alternative
24 Work with
25 Listener
26 Trouble
27 Wood-shaping tool
28 Pool stick
29 Moray, for one
31 Media watchdog org.
34 Tap
35 State with confidence
36 That girl
37 Batman's butler
39 Visitor
40 Fix a manuscript
41 Sea eagle
42 "Phooey!"
43 Read cursorily
44 Plane-related
45 Zoo structure
46 Love god
48 Suitable

Solution time: 21 mins.

B	A	R	R	■	H	U	G	■	A	P	E	D
A	G	E	E	■	U	R	L	■	S	A	G	E
K	I	E	V	■	S	N	O	W	P	L	O	W
F	N	L	I	S	T	■	W	H	I	M	S	Y
■	■	■	E	E	L	S	■	O	R	E	■	■
S	N	O	W	P	E	A	S	■	E	T	C	H
P	U	P	■	T	R	I	P	E	■	T	A	I
A	B	E	T	■	S	N	O	W	J	O	B	S
■	■	■	N	A	P	■	T	R	E	E	■	■
P	O	D	I	U	V	■	A	R	R	A	N	T
S	N	O	W	B	I	R	D	■	S	L	O	E
S	T	O	A	■	V	A	I	■	E	B	O	N
T	O	R	N	■	E	T	C	■	Y	A	K	S

Yesterday's answer 5-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Melanie Brown, 37; Melissa Etheridge, 51; Annette Bening, 54; LaToya Jackson, 56.

Happy Birthday: Look out for your interests and avoid anyone giving you a hard time or pressuring you into something. A change of attitude, friends or even location can lead to greater stability. Upfront and onward should be your motto. Keep things honest and follow your own path. Your numbers are 5, 8, 16, 23, 31, 45, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take care of any concerns you have that can affect your employment. Don't let anyone bully you or pressure you to do something you don't agree with. Rely on experience to help you make the right financial decision now. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You'll face criticism if you left something unfinished. Put in extra effort and time if it will help sway someone to think your way. Learn from experience and you will avoid making the same mistakes over again. Distance yourself from an old partner. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Think before you take action. Stick to your budget and alter your plans to fit what you can afford. A problem with a lover or child will crop up if you haven't been honest about your intentions or the way you feel. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Stick close to home and avoid any interaction with institutions, government agencies or authority figures that may give you a difficult time. Concentrate on your personal or professional relationships and you will improve them. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Your contribution will lead to a serious proposal from someone you impress. Don't jump to conclusions; the deal you are offered will improve your reputation more than your bankbook. Proceed with confidence and you will be one step closer to your goal. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Anger will work against you. Remain calm and offer sensible solutions and you will eventually win support. Changes made to your home or your status will be questionable if ulterior motives are present. Strive for self-improvement. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): The facts you need to make a decision will not be readily handed over. Observe what others are doing. Rely on your intuition and intelligence to help you make the right choice. Don't worry if someone disagrees with your decision. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Offer your help, expertise or knowledge, but don't let anyone take advantage of you financially. Keep your money in your wallet, regardless of the pressure put on you to donate. Success can be yours, but financial rewards will take a little longer. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): The more you say, the more trouble you will get yourself into. You are best to hear and consider what's being asked of you before you make a decision that can alter your lifestyle or personal status. Honesty will be required. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You may be prompted to make a snap decision. Back away from anyone putting pressure on you. Follow your gut, not what someone else wants you to do. Expect to face opposition and be prepared to state your case and your final decision. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): A change at home may take you by surprise, but in the end it will be in your best interest. Discuss the possibility of doing things differently. Prepare to move on and experience new people, places and things. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Problems with a friend, relative or neighbor will mount if you have neglected to do something you promised. Size up your situation and decide if you should back away from someone who has been creating too much trouble for you. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You think, you see and you do. You are a passionate participant.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		8		3		2	6	5
								3
		7	9					
	5			8				
6	8		3		5		1	4
				4			7	
					7	6		
8								
1	3	9		6		8		

Difficulty Level ★★ 5/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	3	9	2	4	5	7	8	6
5	8	4	6	9	7	3	1	2
7	2	6	8	1	3	5	9	4
2	4	7	3	6	1	8	5	9
3	5	1	4	8	9	6	2	7
6	9	8	7	5	2	1	4	3
9	1	2	5	3	6	4	7	8
8	7	3	1	2	4	9	6	5
4	6	5	9	7	8	2	3	1

Difficulty level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ISAAC ASIMOV **Solution: 10 letters**

S	W	E	N	O	B	R	A	C	L	O	C	K	B	P
N	I	Y	A	S	S	E	I	W	F	T	O	B	O	R
O	N	Y	B	O	R	G	R	E	N	O	A	I	S	O
G	D	G	A	L	A	C	T	I	C	U	Z	O	T	L
A	S	L	N	M	T	L	O	V	P	Y	A	C	O	I
R	L	L	A	F	A	P	N	B	A	M	Z	H	N	F
D	P	E	C	M	D	R	O	W	Y	Ⓛ	E	E	G	I
T	O	C	I	Y	R	O	T	S	Ⓐ	F	L	M	E	C
S	W	C	R	D	K	S	T	Ⓦ	T	S	D	I	R	F
E	E	A	E	S	I	E	Ⓢ	O	A	C	J	S	T	A
D	R	T	M	N	R	V	T	R	T	I	A	T	R	N
L	U	O	A	I	S	S	A	L	G	E	N	R	U	T
O	T	M	E	N	S	A	R	D	O	N	E	Y	D	A
R	U	S	S	I	A	N	S	I	L	C	T	O	E	S
H	F	I	C	T	I	O	N	N	D	E	W	E	Y	Y

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American, Atom, Azazel, Biochemistry, Books, Boston, Carbon, Cell, Clock, David, Decimal, Dewey, Empire, Essay, Fall, Fantasy, Fast, Fiction, Future, Galactic, Gertrude, Glass, Gold, Humanist Way, Janet, Laws, Magic, Mensa, Mysteries, News, Oldest Dragon, Point, Postcards, Power, Prolific, Robot, Robyn, Russian, Science, Stars, Story, View, Volt, Winds, Word, World

Yesterday's Answer: Email

THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 20 by the Puzzle Editors, featuring all the WordWords published in 2010, is available for $8.95 plus $3.95 postage for the first book, $1 postage for each additional book. Send to ACCENTUATION, PO Box 1181, Kansas City, MO 64141. Or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480. Online orders: puzzlepicker.com. Contains 48 puzzles, 12 of which are the 20 x 20 size.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

Used Ford Contour Sport 1998. 98K miles. Call Grant at 285-0095. Asking Price is $1500 or B.O.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Sandy Beach Homes 3BR, 2BTH beachfront Chalan Kanoa. Security cams, back-up power/water, washer/dryer in unit, AC, solar water heater. Income eligibility req. apply. $695/mo 235-7263. www.sandybeachhomes.net

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. $450/mo. Call 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. $600/mo. Call 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. $550. Call 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

WHATZIT Solution: Look before you leap

HAFADAI BEACH HOTEL

P.O. BOX 500338 SAIPAN, MP 96950-0338 | TEL: (670) 234-6495 to 98 FAX: (670) 237-2529

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Position: Supervisor, Front Desk

Duties and Responsibilities: To supervise front office employees of hotel and resolve problems arising from guests complaints; Make reservation and room assignment, activities and unusual request and inquires; assign duties and shift to employees; observe performances to ensure adherence to hotel policies and established operating procedures; confers and cooperate with other department heads to ensure coordination of hotel activities; may patrol public rooms; investigate disturbances and warns troublemaker; may register customer and issue keys and other related duties as assigned. Must speak, read and write Chinese to address the Chinese customers concerns and inquires. Must also read, write and speak English.

For more information you may contact Mr. Juan I Tenorio, Manager for Human Resources Department at (670) 234-6495 ext. 5840/2. Employment application forms are available at Hafadai Beach Hotel, Human Resources Department.

AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Opening Date: Friday, May 18, 2012 Closing Date: Until Filled

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JVA 12-012 Trades Technician (Electrician, at least two (2) positions, depending on funding)

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Skills: Must have hands-on experience and solid skills in the hotel reservations; problem solving; oral and written communication. Must be able to lead, manage, and motivate staff. Must have ability to work with international staff. Must be able to work under pressure and in a team environment.

Personal Qualities: Must be well-organized, professional disposition, professional appearance, excellent social skills, mature, responsible, open-minded, flexible, with strong sense of integrity and work ethics.

Experience Required: College Degree graduate, plus minimum of two continuous years experience in F&B Department at managerial capacity, in a five-star hotel, club, or resort.

Duties: Coordinates food service activities of hotel, restaurant, or other similar establishment or at social functions. Estimate food and beverage costs, and requisitions or purchase supplies. Confers with food preparation and other personnel to plan menus and related activities such as dining room, bar and banquet operations. Directs hiring and assignment or personnel. Investigates and resolves food quality and service complaints. May review financial transactions and monitor budget limitation. May be designated according to type of establishment or specialty.

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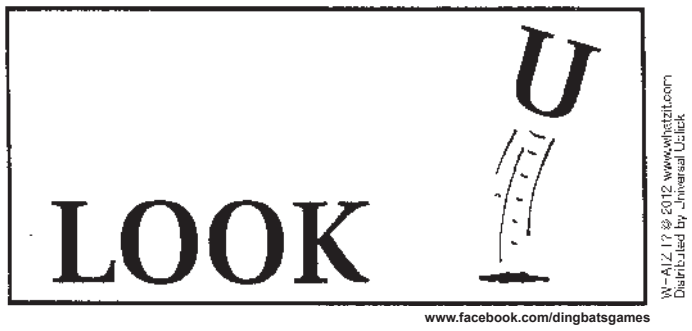

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‘Nasty’ Spurs strike first against Thunder

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—It’s a catchphrase likely coming soon to fan T-shirts, Internet memes and the lexicon of the NBA playoffs for the foreseeable future.

“I want some nasty!”

Gregg Popovich didn’t just coin it. He snarled it, and the way his San Antonio Spurs obliged has the Western Conference finals off to a thrilling start.

Manu Ginobili scored 26 points and the Spurs won their 19th in a row—tying the NBA record for longest winning streak kept alive in the playoffs—by rallying in the fourth quarter on the orders of their furious coach to beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 101-98 in Game 1 on Sunday night.

It was a tantalizing near-upset for the young Thunder, who came as close as anybody to beating the Spurs for the first time in 46 days. But a nine-point lead didn’t last after the famously mercurial 63-year-old Popovich—the NBA’s Coach of the Year—huddled his lagging team together in the fourth and told them to “get nasty.”

“I said that?” Popovich said afterward.

A nationally television audience heard it.

“The heat of the game, stuff comes up,” Popovich said. “So I talked to them about they’ve got to get a little bit uglier, get a little more nasty, play with more fiber and take it to these guys. Meaning you have to drive it, you have to shoot it.”

And when they did, the Thunder couldn’t keep up.

Kevin Durant led the Thunder with 27 points. Russell Westbrook had 17, and insisted he was OK after taking a spill that was nasty in its own right—face first, bracing his fall with his hands and sitting under the basket for more than a minute while the entire Thunder bench walked across the court to check on their All-Star point guard.

“I shot good shots, made good passes,” Durant said. “Unfortunately, we lost.”

After being held to just 16 third-quarter points, San Antonio scored 39 in the fourth. Westbrook chalked it up to a defensive breakdown that “got out of hand” but it still left the Thunder in search of the road win they’ll need to in this series to reach the NBA finals for the first time since the franchise moved to Oklahoma City in 2009.

Game 2 is Tuesday night.

“How it happened is irrelevant,” Thunder guard Derrick Fisher said of letting a lead slip away. “Whether we lose by 20 or lose by one, we lost.”

That’s something the Spurs haven’t been able to say since April 11. They joined the 2001 Lakers as the only other team to carry a winning streak this long in the playoffs—and that Los Angeles team did so on its way to a championship.

The Spurs matched the fourth-longest streak in NBA history, and with one more will become just the fourth team to surpass 20. Tim Duncan had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Tony Parker shook off a dismal start to finish with 18 points.

And of getting “nasty”?

“Pop’s always trying to motivate us,” Parker said.

But it was Ginobili who steered the Spurs to strike first in a highly anticipated matchup of the West’s top two teams for practically the entire regular season. In his first game against the Thunder this year—he was sidelined by injury in the three regular-season meetings—Ginobili put up a playoff high after sputtering through the first two series.

“It just happened,” Ginobili said. “I don’t know how exactly because I haven’t scored like this all season long, but it happened and I am very happy about it.”

On the other end, Oklahoma City’s own Big Three struggled to find its shot early before awakening in the second half. Durant, Westbrook and James Harden at one point through the second quarter were 5 of 21 - a typically ominous stat line for a trio that had been responsible for nearly 70 percent of Oklahoma City’s points through the playoffs so far.

The Thunder were ousted in the Western Conference finals a year ago and were in position for home-court advantage throughout the playoffs until being overtaken by the Spurs in the final month of the season. But it was a fittingly close opener for two franchises with so many similarities.

That includes Thunder general manager Sam Presti—the architect of the Thunder’s rapid turnaround from a 23-win season to consecutive Western Conference finals in just four years—getting his big break in the NBA as intern in San Antonio.

And the Thunder didn’t even need their own Big Three to keep things close.

They leaned on none more so than Fisher, whose famous game-winner for the Lakers on this same court in the 2004 playoffs has made “0.4 seconds” a phrase that needs no further explanation to the Spurs. Eight years later, and the oldest player in this series at 37, Fisher already met his playoff average at halftime and finished with 13 points.

Gary Neal added 12 points and was the only other Spurs player in double figures.

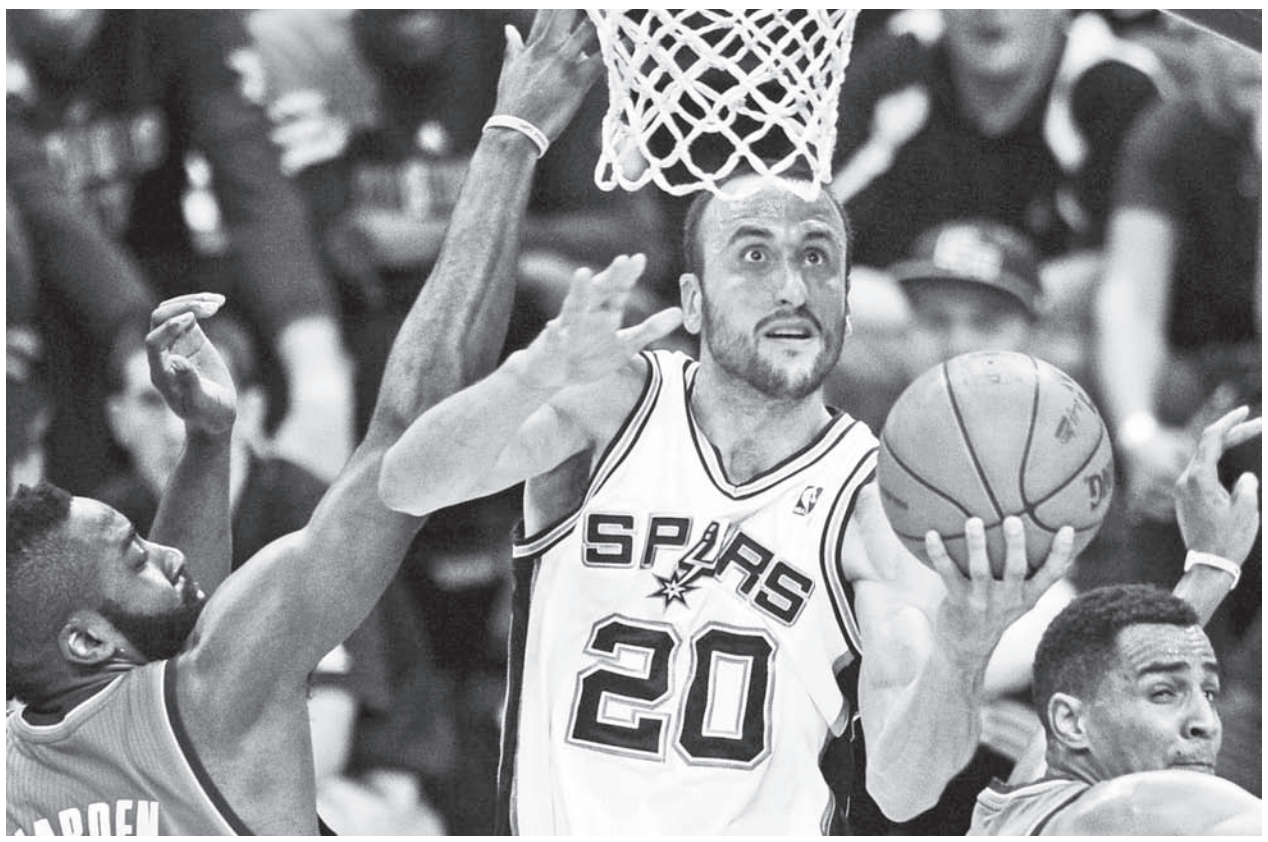
Harden lost in the first round of his matchup with Ginobili, who’s also a lefty and a former Sixth Man of the Year winner. Harden finished with 19 points on 7-of-17 shooting but started by missing nine of his first dozen shots.

Tipping off another conference finals couldn’t happen soon enough for Oklahoma City. With nothing to do but prepare for the Spurs all week—and be asked about the Spurs—the Thunder grew weary of questions about being perceived underdogs. About not having the same championship pedigree. About how they’ll possibly stop a team rolling through one of the 10 longest winning streaks in NBA history.

So repetitive were the questions that Durant, visibly annoyed, suggested earlier this week that someone instead ask how the Thunder are going “to come at” the Spurs. That didn’t stop Oklahoma City from facing more of the same at shootaround Sunday morning, when Thunder coach Scott Brooks tried quashing again the idea his team was somehow intimidated.

“They’re not going to be in awe. They’re going to have respect for them,” Brooks said. “We know we can beat them.”

They’ve still got to prove it.



AP

San Antonio Spurs shooting guard Manu Ginobili (20), of Argentina, shoots between Oklahoma City Thunder guard James Harden, left, and Thabo Sefolosha, right, of Switzerland, during the second half of Game 1 in their NBA basketball Western Conference finals playoff series, Sunday, May 27, 2012, in San Antonio.

Roddick loses in French’s 1st round; Williams wins

PARIS (AP)—Easy to understand why Andy Roddick never enjoyed playing on red clay all that much.

First and foremost, the footing is tricky as can be. The soft courts take his booming serves and forehands down a notch, too. Put simply, his game is built for hard or grass courts. As if that weren’t enough, he arrived at this French Open having played only 16 matches in a season interrupted by injuries to his right hamstring and right ankle.

If Roddick was tempted to sit out Roland Garros altogether—or tempted to use his health or rust as an excuse for playing poorly—he did not. The 26th-seeded American, once ranked No. 1 and once a Grand Slam champion, gave it a shot and came up short Sunday, exiting in a major tournament’s opening round for the first time since 2007, and at the same venue.

His 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 loss to 88th-ranked Nicolas Mahut at the French Open dropped Roddick’s record to 7-10 this season, 0-4 on clay. Of the seven previous major title winners in action on Day 1 in Paris, including Venus Williams in her first Grand Slam match since revealing in August she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, only Roddick was beaten.

“Wasn’t playing really well. I move just horrendously out here. My first step is just so bad on this stuff,” Roddick said. “I feel like I’m always shuffling or hopping or not stopping or something.”

Like Roddick, and for much the same reasons, Williams is not nearly as comfortable on clay as faster surfaces.

She’s also dealing with the difficult process of learning to live with Sjogren’s syndrome, a condition that can cause fatigue and joint pain. But the 31-year-old Williams, a seven-time major champion, overcame a slow start Sunday to beat 19-year-old Paula Ormaechea of Argentina 4-6, 6-1, 6-3.

“A lot of it, I have to figure it out. It’s physical and emotional and all kinds of different things. Mental,” Williams said of her medical condition. “It’s a big accomplishment for me to be here right now.”

She looked glum on court, not even smiling after most of her 41 winners (Ormaechea only had 15). But she laughed frequently during her news conference, such as when she talked about what she’s been going through as “definitely an adventure and journey; it’s life happening.”

The other past major champions who won Sunday were Juan Martin del Potro, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Sam Stosur, Ana Ivanovic and Svetlana Kuznetsova. Monday’s schedule includes Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Victoria Azarenka and Li Na.

Mahut hit more aces than Roddick, 13-8, and broke him seven times, including in the last game on Court Suzanne Lenglen, an arena the American is not fond of.

Roddick only once made it as far as the fourth round in 10 trips to Roland Garros, in 2009. He’s lost in the first round five times now. And there’s a reason the guy never saw success at the French Open the way he did at the U.S. Open (champion), Wimbledon (runner-up three times) or Australian Open (semifinalist four times).

“I just feel like I get exposed too easily out here. I feel like I’m not set on most shots. If you’re not set, it’s tough to get much of a flow going. When you don’t have much of a flow going, it lends itself to sporadic play. It all adds up,” Roddick said. “You can’t fake it out here. ... It’s tough to lie out here.”

Back on tour last week after two months away, Roddick was asked a handful of times about his physical state and recovery.

“I’m going to not discuss it. I made a choice. I played. I’m fine. I lost,” he said, his expression downcast under a blue baseball hat bearing the logo of his French sponsor.

“Not being confident on something isn’t the same as just not being bothered with it. You know, as athletes, we’re preconditioned to hope sometimes. Coming into this, I didn’t have much to kind of prop myself up on,” Roddick said. “But, you know, I played a guy who it’s not his favorite surface either, so there was a chance. You just don’t know. If everyone pulled out of every tournament when they weren’t feeling great or confident, we wouldn’t have a lot of fields that were much to write home about. We’d have about four people in most draws.”

Mahut lost in the first round eight times in nine previous appearances in Paris. He is best known for losing the longest match in tennis history to John Isner, 70-68 in the fifth set at Wimbledon in the first round in 2010.

Mahut acknowledged the 29-year-old man he faced Sunday “was not the No. 1 Roddick, the No. 1 player in the world that we know.”

Still, Roddick did make a bit of a stand, hitting a backhand passing winner down the line to take the third set, then breaking Mahut to open the fourth.

“Then,” Roddick would lament, “it fell apart pretty quick.”

Now it’s on to a happier segment of the season.

“There are a lot of guys who know how to play on clay, and it’s just second nature to them,” Roddick said. “I feel that way on grass, so hopefully I can turn it around there.”

He’ll play next at Queen’s Club, which starts in London on June 11, then Wimbledon.

After that, he wants to play at the Olympics, which will have tennis on the grass of the All England Club.

And what about his supposed plan to play mixed doubles at the London Games with Serena Williams?

“Ask her. I can’t get ahold of her,” Roddick replied. “If you see her, ask her for me.”

Johnson overcomes Dufner to win at Colonial

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—Zach Johnson was so caught up in the emotion of another Colonial title and a victory in honor of his caddie's late father that he forgot to properly remark his ball before his final putt.

Even with a two-stroke penalty, Johnson won by one over Jason Dufner and got to slip on the plaid jacket Sunday for his first victory since also winning at Hogan's Alley two years ago.

"There's a number of adjectives I'm calling myself right now. And lucky would be the biggest one," Johnson said. "Blessed would be another one, humbled would be another one. It's an honor to put this jacket on once. ... I'm in shock I got it twice."

Johnson moved his original ball mark out of the line of Dufner's putt on the 18th green. But he never moved it back before his final 5-foot putt.

The penalty was assessed before he signed his scorecard, and Johnson's 12-under 268 total was enough to edge Dufner, who finally faltered and closed with a 74.

Johnson had already shared celebratory hugs and kisses with his two young sons and done a winner's television interview before caddie Damon Green, prompted by a rules official, asked the 2007 Masters champion if he had put his ball back in its original spot.

"First time it crossed my mind," Johnson said. "It's not going to be the last time."

The victory came 10 days after Green's 88-year old father died from stomach cancer. After Johnson's runner-up finish at The Players Championship two weeks ago, the caddie drove to Pensacola, Fla., to see his father. But Damon Green was ready to get back on the course this week.

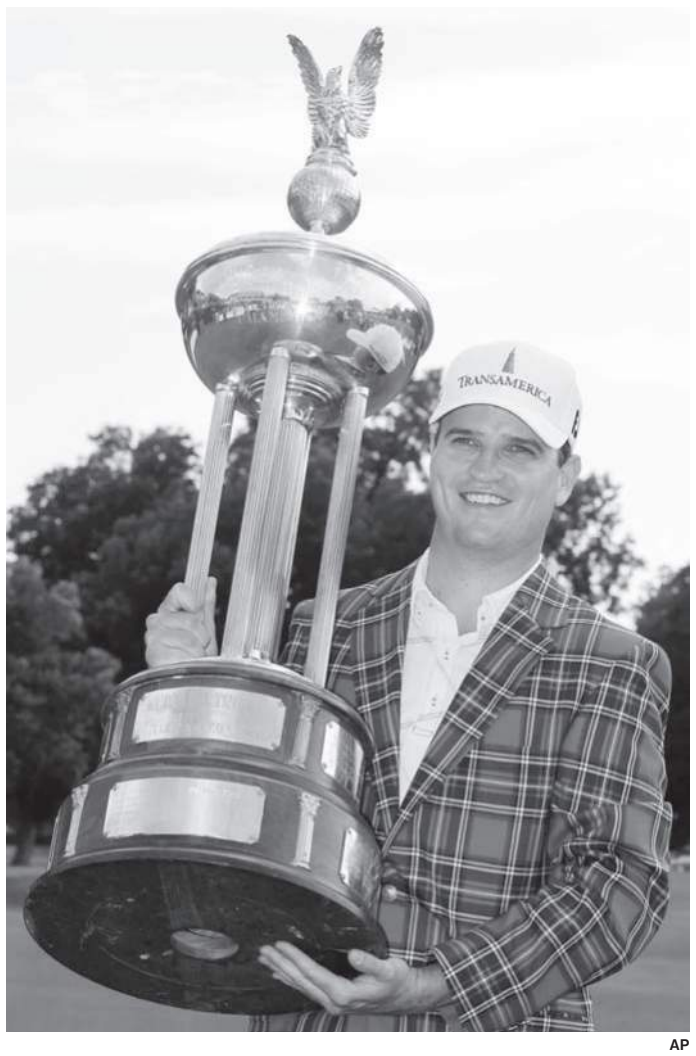
"He wanted to be here, he felt like his dad wanted him to be here," Johnson about his caddie of 10 years. "I think he's the one that deserves this one more than I do. His courage and certainly his strength to get through last week and then work, and work well this week, to stay focused somehow. That's really commendable."

It is the eighth PGA Tour victory for Johnson, who won $1,152,000 even as his record streak of 15 consecutive under-par rounds at Colonial ended.

Tommy Gainey was a distant third at 7 under after a 67, a stroke better than Jim Furyk.

In what was essentially a match-play final round, Johnson took command at the 414-yard 15th hole. Dufner's approach hit the left side of that green then rolled into a ditch, leading to a triple bogey that put him four strokes back after Johnson's par.

Dufner's only two PGA Tour victories came in the previous four weeks, a stretch when he also got married.



AP

Zach Johnson poses with the trophy after winning the PGA Colonial golf tournament, Sunday, May 27, 2012, in Fort Worth, Texas.

After winning last week at the Byron Nelson Championship, he was trying to match Ben Hogan, his hero, as the only players to win both PGA Tour events in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in the same year. Hogan did it in 1946, when the tournaments weren't played in consecutive weeks.

"Pretty good run, today obviously a little disappointing to play that poorly and not kind of a chance there at the end," said Dufner, insisting fatigue didn't come into play. "I feel pretty good actually. ... I just played really poorly today."

There had already been four two-stroke swings between Dufner and Johnson before that fateful 15th hole.

Dufner drove into a fairway bunker before the shot that trickled over a ledge into the water. He then pitched his drop all the way over the green and missed a 4-foot putt for double bogey.

Johnson made par at the same hole where a day earlier his approach settled into a grassy clump only inches from going into that ditch. With his feet together to keep from falling over himself, Johnson's pitch from about 81 feet rolled only inches from the cup.

"I hit a terrible shot (Saturday), got lucky. Got a nice break," Johnson said. "He didn't hit a great shot today. But he got a bad break. I don't know how else to explain it other than the fact that it's golf."

Johnson had blown a two-stroke lead before going back ahead with his 9-foot birdie putt at the 445-yard 14th.

At the 616-yard 11th, a straight par 5, Johnson's drive hit a tree and ricocheted back into the middle of the fairway. He took advantage with an 18 1/2-foot birdie putt to get to 15 under.

Dufner wasn't as fortunate with his wayward drive, which settled under a tree. He had to punch a low shot around the branches before hitting his approach into a greenside bunker and two-putting from 23 feet for bogey.

But Dufner needed only one hole to get even again, with an 8-foot birdie at No. 12. Johnson hit his tee shot into a fairway bunker, then his first attempt out of there hit the lip and rebounded over and behind him before a bogey.

They were tied at 14 under going to the back nine after Dufner's double bogey at the 386-yard ninth hole, where his approach from 103 yards hit just short of the green and rolled back into the water.

After driving into a fairway bunker at the 382-yard second hole, Dufner three-putted from 28 feet for his first bogey on any of the first eight holes all week. Johnson made a 28-foot birdie putt to go in front by a stroke.

At No. 5, Dufner made an 8-footer for his third birdie of the week at the tight par 4 parallel to the Trinity River that is one of Colonial's toughest holes. Even after a frustrating tee shot into the rough at the sixth hole, Dufner regained the lead by rolling in a 34-foot birdie putt.

Johnson trailed by two strokes when his tee shot at the 188-yard eighth was way left before his short pitch shot missed the green and he bogeyed.

"What (Dufner) has done the last month is beyond impressive," Johnson said. "I kind of feel like I somewhat unseated a king to me because he has been on top for four weeks."

Rays turn table on Red Sox, rally for 4-3 win

BOSTON (AP)—Sean Rodriguez hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning off Boston closer Alfredo Aceves as the Tampa Bay Rays rallied for a 4-3 victory over the Red Sox on Sunday, a day after losing in the final inning.

Will Rhymes went 3 for 3 with three singles and an RBI for the Rays, who lost Saturday night on a pinch-hit, two-run homer by Jarrod Saltalamacchia in the ninth off closer Fernando Rodney.

Rangers 12, Blue Jays 6

In Arlington, Texas, Adrian Beltre homered during a seven-run second inning, and Yu Darvish posted his seventh victory as Texas defeated Toronto for a three-game sweep.

The AL West leaders outscored the Blue Jays 34-16 in the series, extending Toronto's losing streak to five games. Ian Kinsler homered, doubled and drove in four runs and Michael Young had three hits for Texas. Mike Napoli added a two-run shot, ending his 24-game homerless drought.

Yankees 2, Athletics 0

In Oakland, California, Hiroki Kuroda (4-6) pitched eight scoreless innings and Andruw Jones hit a solo homer to help the New York Yankees win their season-high fifth straight game.

The Yankees got off to a strong start to their nine-game road trip by sweeping the three-game series in Oakland, extending their winning streak at the Coliseum to nine games.

Tigers 4, Twins 3

In Minneapolis, Miguel Cabrera's two-run, one-out homer in the ninth inning lifted Detroit to a 4-3 victory over Minnesota, as the Tigers finished a three-game sweep of the Twins in style after leaving 10 men on base earlier in the game.

Cabrera crushed a 0-2 pitch to center field from Matt Capps (0-3), who took his first blown save in 10 tries. Rookie Quintin Berry started the inning with a single.

White Sox 12, Indians 6

In Chicago, Paul Konerko hit a tiebreaking three-run homer—his 400th with the White Sox—as Chicago routed Cleveland to complete a three-game sweep.

Gavin Floyd (4-5) got the win for the White Sox, who have won five straight for the first time this season and nine of 10 overall.

Chicago has homered in 13 consecutive games for the first time since 2006, and scored nine or more runs in four consecutive games. The White Sox haven't accomplished that feat since June 27-30, 1938, according to the team, which cited the Elias Sports Bureau.

Angels 4, Mariners 2

In Seattle, Kendrys Morales had three hits, including a home run, scored twice and drove in two runs to help the Los Angeles Angels complete their first four-game road sweep of Seattle in 27 years.

C.J. Wilson (6-4) earned the win, allowing two hits and one run before leaving after six innings with a blister on his left hand. Scott Downs picked up his fifth save for the Angels.

Royals 4, Orioles 2

In Baltimore, Jeff Francoeur and Billy Butler hit home runs, and Alcides Escobar had two hits to lead Kansas City over Baltimore.

Francoeur had a terrific series, hitting 7 for 12 against the Orioles, including two homers. Butler had home runs in successive games for the Royals, who won two consecutive games for the first time since a four-game winning streak from May 12-15.

Cardinals 8, Phillies 3

In St. Louis, Roy Halladay gave up a grand slam to Yadier Molina in an abbreviated two-inning start before leaving with shoulder soreness as the St. Louis Cardinals avoided a four-game sweep with a win over the Philadelphia Phillies.

The Phillies were looking for their first four-game sweep in St. Louis in 99 years.

Halladay (4-5) departed with a 3.98 ERA after an outing that matched the second-shortest outing of his career. The team said the two-time Cy Young pitching award winner was taken out as a precautionary measure and that he'll be re-evaluated in the next few days.

Giants 3, Marlins 2

In Miami, Melky Cabrera equaled a career high with four hits, including a home run, and scored all three runs for San Francisco to help Matt Cain beat Miami.

Cabrera went 4 for 4 to raise his average to .369 and has 73 hits, most in the majors. He also stole two bases.

Pirates 10, Cubs 4

In Pittsburgh, the Chicago Cubs lost their 12th straight game as Pedro Alvarez, Andrew McCutchen and Garrett Jones homered for Pittsburgh.

Erik Bedard (3-5) allowed two hits in six shutout innings. Pittsburgh completed its first three-game sweep at PNC Park since Sept. 17-19, 2010.

The Cubs' skid is their longest since they started out 0-14 in the 1997 season. Matt Garza (2-3) took the loss.

Reds 7, Rockies 5

In Cincinnati, Brandon Phillips hit a three-run homer to help Cincinnati outslug Colorado in a game that set a record for Great American Ball Park with nine home runs.

Mat Latos (4-2) allowed five hits—and all of them were solo home runs. Colorado's Carlos Gonzalez hit two of them, and Troy Tulowitzki, Michael Cuddyer and Dexter Fowler also took the Cincinnati starter deep.

Mets 2, Padres 0

In New York, R.A. Dickey struck out 10 batters and reached double digits for strikeouts in consecutive games for the first time in his career as the New York Mets held San Diego scoreless for the second straight day.

Dickey (7-1) struck out 11 Pirates on Tuesday. He is the first Mets pitcher to have back-to-back games with at least 10 Ks since Pedro Martinez did it in May 2006.

Dodgers 5, Astros 1

In Los Angeles, Jerry Hairston Jr. got a career-high five hits and Chris Capuano won again as the Los Angeles Dodgers beat Houston.

Matt Treanor put the Dodgers ahead for good with a home run in the fourth inning that deflected off center fielder Justin Maxwell's glove as he made a leaping attempt in left-center field.

Diamondbacks 4, Brewers 3

In Phoenix, Aaron Hill doubled twice and singled as Arizona rallied past Milwaukee.

Arizona won a series at home for the first time since a season-opening, three-game sweep of San Francisco.

Bryan Shaw (1-2) threw one pitch to induce an inning-ending double play in the sixth to get the win. Jose Veras (3-2) took the loss.

Nationals 7, Braves 2

In Atlanta, Bryce Harper hit his second homer in two days and Gio Gonzalez gave up only one hit in seven innings as Washington beat struggling Atlanta to complete a three-game sweep.

Washington's first sweep at Turner Field in three years left the Braves with a seven-game losing streak, their worst skid since dropping nine straight in 2010.

Japanese tourists scrimmage with MATTA mainstays

Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association members Budhi Gurung and Jean Shi had a grand time playing ping-pong with Japanese tourists Tetsuya Ozaki and Fumio Nakamura during the latter's recent vacation on Saipan.

Ozaki, 48, and Nakamura, 50, are members of the Kawaguchi Cosmos Table Tennis Club in Japan. Ozaki, for one, has participated in several tournaments in Japan, while Nakamura has been playing the sport only the past two years.

The two are part of the 28-person group from Naito Kankyo, which stayed for three nights at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Gurung works for Sablan Topline, which does cleaning services for the Garapan hotel.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Japanese tourists Tetsuya Ozaki and Fumio Nakamura pose with Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association members Budhi Gurung and Jean Shi as well as Shi's son David after scrimmaging at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside.

Gurung said Ozaki really enjoyed practicing ping-pong with him for two hours in the morning at the Hyatt poolside despite heavy rains.

Ozaki even told him that ping-pong is an indoor game so he really enjoyed running after the ball a lot all the time because there were no barricades for the ball to stop.

Since Naito Kankyo will have one more group of tourists coming next month and will stay at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, Ozaki is requesting Gurung to schedule ping-pong practices with then as well.

Aside from Gurung and Shi, who is the defending Micronesian Games table tennis women's champion, Shi's son David Yang, 16, also took part in the practice sessions with the two Japanese tourists.

Gurung said he also invited Ozaki to bring his ping-pong club to the 18th Goodwill Table Tennis Tournament set later this year. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

RED SOX

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frame with two RBI base knocks by Roke Tenorio and Nathan Camacho.

The team then pushed ahead, 4-2, in the second inning off errors, but Ol'Aces recovered from the plate and took the lead, 5-4, off three hits in the top of the third.

Ol'Aces' Jessie Brel drove in Giovanni Taitingfong and Verlance Secharmidal hustled all the way around off errors.

Red Sox got out of the jam with runners at first and second, but went three up and three down in the bottom portion.

Ol'Aces produced two more runs in the fourth inning, but the Red Sox tied the game at 7-apiece in the bottom half.

Ol'Aces' Payton Lizama reached on a fielder's choice and scored off an error, while Brel was singled home by Muna, but the Red Sox sifted out three runs to close the frame off four hits.

Won Jong Seo drew a walk and Jhace Palacios reached on a fielder's choice, which set up a two-RBI base knock by Craig Aguon.

Aguon was caught in the path, but Jerald Cabrera kept them alive with a two-out single and scored the tying run thanks to a costly infield error.

Ol'Aces escaped and then put runners on the corners with one out in the sixth inning, prompting the Red Sox to bring Cabrera to the rubber for Palacios.

Cabrera kept Ol'Aces at bay and went on to score the go-ahead run himself in the bottom half, reaching and scoring off errors as Ol'Aces' defense crumbled in the clutch.

Then in the final stand, Ol'Aces had the tying run 90 feet away, but a one-hop sizzler down the third base line was snagged in fair territory by Red Sox's Melvin Sakisat who applied the tag on the runner.

It all happened so fast that Sakisat almost forgot to throw it over to first base to complete the game-ending double play.

Ol'Aces were in disbelief that it all ended so quickly and lobbied for a foul ball, but it fell on deaf ears as the umpires were on top of the play from the start.

Despite going just 1-for-3 at the plate, Red Sox's Cabrera scored three runs, two of which came during crucial points of the game. Ol'Aces' Brel batted 3-for-4 with an RBI and three runs.

Other Red Sox players include Vincent Leon Guerrero, Jeffrey Palacios, Jobe Reyes, Jesse Sablan, Jonathan Sagun, Berneil Taisacan, Rayvan Tudela, and Joseph Tyquinco.

Manager Anthony Leon Guerrero with coaches Randall Aguon, Thomas Camacho, Paul Reyes, and Dennis Cruz fronted the squad.

STREAKS

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February when he beat Amami Sakano in the finals, 8-4. The 16-year-old netter also reigned in the PIC tournament against Daniel Park last month, 6-1, 6-3, and in the CNMI Junior Championships early this month after thwarting Jones in a three-set finale, 6-7, 6-2, 6-4.

Jones advanced to last Monday's finals after sweeping Jake Lee in the second semis game last Sunday afternoon, 6-4, 6-3. Miller took the first finals ticket and strengthened his bid for his fourth straight championship this year after a 6-2, 6-3 semis victory over Sakano last Sunday morning. Sakano also lost in the consolation game against Lee, 2-6, 0-6.

In the boys U15 division, Cajigan successfully defended his title after downing first-time finalist Moris Villanueva in the championship game yesterday afternoon, 6-4, 6-3. The boys U15 title was third in a row for Cajigan this year, as he also took the age group crown in the PIC tournament and CNMI juniors, both against Carl Dela Cruz.

Dela Cruz missed a rematch against Cajigan when Villanueva pulled off an upset over the former in the lower half bracket semis last Sunday, 6-2, 6-2. Cajigan, on the other hand, marched into his second straight finals stint in the Micronesian event after easing past Dylan Ackerman in the upper half bracket semis. Cajigan won last year's U15 title against Chris Park.

Besides the U18 and boys U15 competitions, the Micronesian tournament also featured events in the girls U15 and boys and girls U12 and U10. Results of other divisions will be published in *Saipan Tribune*'s Wednesday edition.

MOBIL

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defeated DLX, 84-78, and Hip Hop Thunder outlasted Loving Hands (0-1), 71-62, on Friday.

In the season opener held last May 19, the R-Rebels defeated Ashley, 65-42, before the rain caused a halt to the late night pairing after Loving Hands built a 45-35 halftime lead.

Details of last night's matches will be released tomorrow.

Mobil worked out an early, 20-16, edge as Jun Estolas and Gyles Ruluked teamed up for 13 points in the first frame.

They kept up the pace in the second quarter and moved in front, 44-36, at the half. Estolas buried two treys for 8 points in the period.

R-Rebels were hardly about to give up and grinded out a 55-54 lead heading into the final period.

R-Rebels held Estolas to just three buckets in the third quarter and kept the rest of the Mobil crew at bay, but still needed someone to take charge on the offensive end.

Estolas rebounded in the clutch and delivered a baker's dozen that helped secure the win. He took a spill in the last two minutes and bumped his knee, but shook it off through regulation.

Estolas finished heads and shoulders above the field with 33 points, while Ogumoro paced R-Rebels with 13.

In Saturday's opener, Wanted Sponsors' Kae Bernardo bruised his way for 8 points complemented by a pair of long balls by Jay-Ar Cadag that gave their team a 26-18 margin in the first period.

Cargo Express, however, struck back and assumed control, 40-37, at the midpoint.

Pete Lizama connected with three bombs from downtown for 13 points in the rally cry.

Then after some adjustments at halftime, Wanted Sponsors' Gilbert Miranda pumped in 10 points that went with 9 more from Bernardo in the third quarter as they jumped back in the driver's seat, 66-56, heading into the final canto.

Wanted Sponsors continued to run the court at will and maintained its double-digit lead until the final buzzer.

Wanted Sponsors' Bernardo and Cargo Express' Lizama both finished with 23 points.

QQ Rent-A-Car, meanwhile, doubled up DLX, 30-15, in the opening 10 minutes of Friday's opener as Elgene Mangali and Ichitaro Faisao turned in 9 points apiece.

DLX's Pando Muleta and Leo Galarse then matched the high-scoring duo in the second quarter as they battled their team back to within three possessions, 48-40, at halftime.

QQ's Lerio Pagarao erupted for 12 points after intermission to stretch the lead to 70-61 with 10 minutes left in regulation and then sunk seven pressure-packed free throws in the final period to secure the deal.

QQ's Mangali led three teammates in double figures with 19, while DLX's Elmer Esdrelon scrambled for a game-high 23 in the loss.

In Friday's late matchup Hip Hop Thunders' Ivan Devero dropped a dozen in the opening period to give his team early 19-16 edge.

The Thunder then contained its opponent to just 8 points in the second quarter to preserve a 31-23 halftime lead.

Loving Hands' Sonny Lerio drained a trio of 3-pointers in a comeback attempt in the third quarter, but it was not enough as the Thunders' Gino Libuw delivered 7 in response to maintain a 49-45 margin heading into crunch time where Thunders' Devero ran away with it in the end.

Devero tallied 13 in the final push and finished the game with a game-high 28. Lerio managed 17 in defeat.

R-Rebels' Fred Litulumar heated up right from the tip way back on opening night with 8 points in the first quarter, but his team found itself behind early, 10-11.

R-Rebels kicked in gear in the second quarter, however and jolted ahead, 32-18, at the break. Six players provided the damage in addition to holding Ashley to just four baskets in the quarter.

R-Rebels trotted out to a 47-28 advantage in the third period as Edwin Camacho paced the group with a handful of markers and they coasted to an easy win in the payoff period.

Litulumar led R-Rebels with 16 points, while Ashley's Jack Lizama finished with a game-high 17 on the short end.

SATURDAY
First Game

Wanted Sponsor 89 – Bernardo 23, Miranda 20, Sablan 16, Rollon 14, Cadag 8, Pantaleon 8.

Cargo Express 77 – P. Lizama 23, Berline 17, Morales 17, Sharry 6, Francisco 5, Archangel 3, Talania 3, Legaspi 2.

Scoring by quarters: 26-18, 37-40, 66-56, 89-77.

Second Game

Mobil 78 – Estolas 33, Ruluked 17, Fernando 14, Villarin 6, Demapan 5, De Guzman 3.

R-Rebels 73 – Ogumoro 13, Ulloa 11, Norita 8, Lisua 7, Galulu 6, Reyes 6, Teregeyo 6, Camacho 4, Fitial 4, Ichinis 4, Litulumar 3.

Scoring by quarters: 20-16, 44-36, 54-55, 78-73

FRIDAY
First Game

QQ Rent-A-Car 84 – Mangali 19, Faisao 14, B Camacho 12, Pagarao 12, Cruz 7, Palacios 6, Paraiso 5, Sison 4, Bondoc 1.

DLX 78 – Esdrelon 23, Galarse 21, Muleta 9, Abedes 8, David 5, Delarama 3, Fernandez 3, Barbo 2, Guiab 2, Trajano 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-15, 48-40, 70-61, 84-78.

Second Game

Hip Hop Thunder 71 – Devero 28, Durant 12, Castro 9, Tumaquip 7, Concepcion 6, Sacramento 6.

Loving Hands 62 – Lerio 17, Rabauliman 12, Barrios 9, Aquino 9, Tabora 6, Johannes 4, Abuy 3, Itaas 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-15, 31-23, 49-44, 71-62.

May 19

R-Rebels 65 – Litlulumar 16, Fitial 14, E Camacho 11, Lisua 7, Ogarto 5, Ogumoro 4, Galulu 3, Norita 3, Camacho 2.

Ashley 42 – Lizama 17, Mungcal 9, Inos 7, Ito 3, Mendoza 3, Kapileo 2, Manapim 2.

Scoring by Quarters: 10-11, 32-18, 47-28, 65-42.

MASTERS

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pinfalls in Game 12. Before the last game, Talavera recorded 2,180 pinfalls, 26 pinfalls ahead of Omechelang, who had 2,154 after 11 games for third place. Castro was in second place after 11 games with his 2,165, but dropped to third when he made only 193 pinfalls for a total of 2,358.

Nineteen other male keglers joined the May Masters event played from May 25 to 27 at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose. The list includes fourth placer Rusty Musca (2,301), and Raphael (2,279) and Ruselle Zapanta (2,227), who along with the Top 3 finishers received cash prizes. Omechelang went home with a trophy and $800 cash, while Talavera and Castro pocketed $400 and $200, respectively. Musca received $100, while Raphael and Ruselle got $80 and $60, respectively.

Omechelang and company competed in the May Masters finale last Sunday after joining a four-game qualifying tournament. Danny Robles topped the qualifier with his 1,864 pinfalls, but fell to ninth in the finals, while Omechelang was only fourth in the preliminary with a four-game total of 1,770.

In the women's division, Camacho was only second after the qualifier with her 1,503 pinfalls, but jumped to first at the end of the centerpiece May Masters event when she tallied 2,189 pinfalls.

Like Omechelang, Camacho also showed tough form in the last three games, firing 206, 207, and 205 pinfalls in Games 10 to 12, to lord it over in the 16-bowler field. She was 133 pinfalls ahead of Omechelang's wife, Gloria, who tallied only 2,056 pinfalls after slowing down in the last two games (150 and 157).

Rounding out the Top 5 in the women's division were Gina Sablan (2,033), qualifiers top finisher Yho Villavicencio (2,024), and Carol McKenzie (1,989).

Camacho was awarded the May Masters trophy she last hoisted in 2004 when she defeated Rizza Hensley and a $375 cash prize. Gloria Omechelang and Sablan also received trophies and $175 and $100, respectively, while Villavicencio and McKenzie settled for $75 and $40.

Besides the Masters event, the Budweiser-sponsored competition also held contests in singles, doubles, team, and all events with the winners to be published later this week.

2012 U17 Micronesian Basketball Tournament

PHOTOS By MARK RABAGO

Guam's Sam Setik scores on a breakaway layup against Palau in the boys championship game of the U17 Micronesian Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Guam's Kara Duenas fades away against two CNMI 1 defenders during the first half of their girls finals match in the U17 MBT last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CNMI 1's Keolani Rios pump-fakes against two CNMI 2 defenders in their semis match at the Ada Gym.

Guam's Alina Bunto is fouled by CNMI 1's Rachel Abrams in their first round match at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Guam's Sammy Setik, a member of the U17 MBT All Tournament team, adjusts in a midair while attempting a shot against Saipan 1 in the preliminary round.

CNMI 1's Christian Mizer barrels into Saipan 1's Erick Dela Rosa in the preliminary round.

Jaymark De Guzman contorts his body for a layup against Palau in the semis.

Palau's Edward Baysa challenges the defense of CNMI 1 in their semis game last Friday.

CNMI 1's Kaylani Lebria tries a corner 3 against CNMI 2.

Guam's Alina Bunto drives to the basket after eluding CNMI 1's Rachel Abrams.

'Nasty' Spurs strike first against Thunder

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Sports

Johnson overcomes Dufner to win at Colonial

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Red Sox are Junior League champions

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Red Sox pose for group shot after topping Ol'Aces in the Junior League championship game last Sunday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

The Red Sox upset pennant champion Hawaiya Technologies, Inc.-Ol'Aces, 8-7, to win the Junior Division championship of the 2012 Saipan Little League last Sunday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Tied at 7-all in the sixth inning, the Red Sox scored the go-ahead run in the seventh then pulled out an unexpected double play that shocked the pennant champion off the field in what was an electric duel for the Junior League championship.

Last Sunday also saw the Senior and Big leagues crown their respective champions, but results will be published by the *Saipan Tribune* in the days ahead.

It was an exciting finals for the Junior League to say the least with Ol'Aces drawing first blood when Mike Muna and Kenji Yamagata lifted a pair of sacrifice fly balls in the top of the first inning.

Red Sox, however, would answer immediately in the bottom

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Streaks continue in Micronesian jr. tennis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three players extended their respective streaks as the 2012 Micronesian Junior Tennis Championships wrapped up yesterday at the Pacific Islands Club hard court in San Antonio.

Thea Minor notched her fourth girls U18 tiara in the Micronesian tournament, Christian Miller gained his fourth straight boys U18 title of the year, and Chris Cajigan bagged his third consecutive boys U15 crown in 2012 and second in a row in the same annual competition.

Minor, who defeated older sister, Theecel, in 2010 and 2011 editions of the Micronesian tournament and Lila Mailman in 2009, ruled the round-robin girls U18 event that started last Friday. She first downed Mikayla Lopez, 6-0, 6-1, last Friday, and then won via walkover against Melody Johnson last Sunday. Minor's third win was recorded yesterday and a 6-0, 6-0 triumph over Alina Ishikawa allowed the former to sweep the field and secure the championship.

In the boys U18 division Miller stretched his winning run to four after thumping rival Rafael Jones, 6-1, 6-3. Miller's streak started in the Coconut Classic in

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Chris Cajigan, seen here making a return to Carl Dela Cruz in a junior tournament last month, defended his boys U15 title in the 2012 Micronesian Junior Tennis Championships after beating Moris Villanueva in the finals yesterday at the Pacific Islands Club hard court in San Antonio.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Diana Camacho, left, and Percy Omechelang pose with their championship trophies during the awards ceremony for the 30th CNMI May Masters Tournament last Sunday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

Omechelang, Camacho top May Masters

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Percy Omechelang escaped with a one-pinfall win in the 30th CNMI May Masters Tournament for his first men's Masters crown after eight years of competing, while Diana Camacho also ended a long losing skid in the women's division.

Omechelang posted a 12-game total of 2,361 pinfalls, stealing the men's Masters championship from eventual runner-up Robert Talavera and third placer Alex Castro after playing steady in the last three games. Omechelang knocked down more than 200 pins in Games 10, 11, and 12 (202, 225, and 207) and had 200-plus performance in four earlier games (215 in Game 3, 204 in Game 4, 221 in Game 5, and 209 in Game 7) to stun favored and former May Masters champions Talavera and Castro.

Talavera collected 2,360 pinfalls in 12 games, falling two pinfalls short of reclaiming the title he last won in 2009 after earning only 180

See **MASTERS** on **Page 26**

Mobil holds off R-Rebels, 78-73

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Mobil turned it on in the second half against R-Rebels (1-1), 78-73, last Saturday as the 2012 Blue Haus Invitational Basketball League finally got things going this weekend at the Garapan Basketball Court after recent rainfall hindered the start of the season.

In other results, Wanted Sponsor triumphed over Cargo Express, 89-77, in Saturday's opener, while QQ Rent-A-Car

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Mobil's Jun Estolas tries to navigate through traffic against R-Rebels in the Blue Haus caging last Saturday at the Garapan Basketball Court.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND